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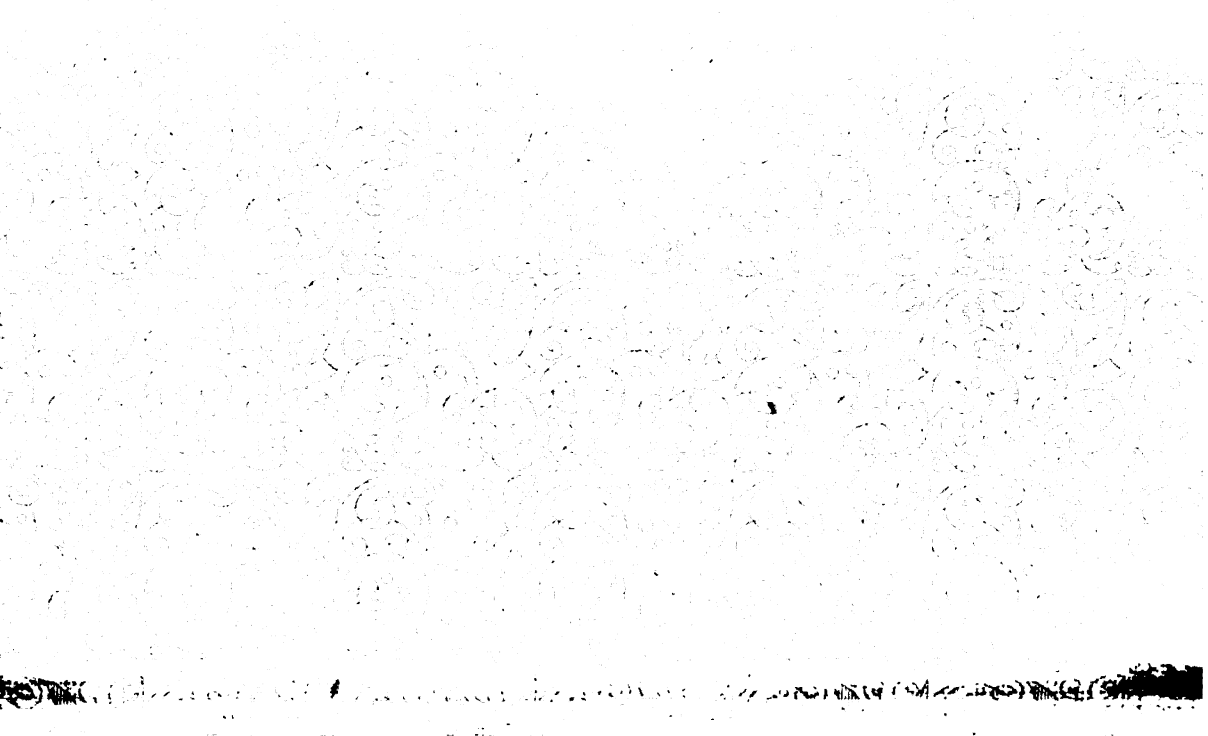

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION

TO

MODERN PHILOSOPHY

BY

ARTHUR KENYON ROGERS, PH.D.

New York
THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
LONDON: MACMILLAN & CO., LTD.
1899

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Norwood Press
J. S. Cushing & Co. — Berwick & Smith
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PREFACE

THE following pages have been written with a definite aim in view. This aim has been, in as untechnical a way as possible, and with as little presupposition of previous philosophical training, to show how the problems of philosophy, which are apt to seem to the student on his first introduction to them rather arbitrary and unintelligible, and with no very apparent relation to the concrete interests of life, in reality are not manufactured problems, but arise of necessity out of any attempt honestly to understand the world, and to appreciate the value which belongs to human experience. A book with this aim requires to be comparatively brief, and to confine itself to the essential and typical points of view, in order to avoid confusing the reader; it must come back continually

to everyday beliefs and interests, and show the real meaning of philosophy in terms of these; and it must possess sufficient definiteness of treatment to convey a unified impression, and not to leave behind the feeling of having been engaged with a number of interesting, but not very closely connected, problems. There are several excellent and well-known introductions to philosophy, but none of them, I believe, exactly covers the ground just outlined. That there is room for another attempt I think teachers generally will admit, though I am far from being sure that I have been able to meet the need.

While, however, I have tried to state the problems as simply as they will admit of being stated, I do not profess that philosophy has thereby been rendered easy. No one can be a philosopher who is not willing to think, and to think hard, on his own account; no book or teacher can perform the operation for him. Any one who comes to the study must be presumed to have his powers more or less matured, and he must expect to be obliged to use them to the

uttermost. Nevertheless, philosophy has evolved for itself a technicality in standpoint and phraseology which certainly admits of simplification, and many of the more or less artificial difficulties confronting the beginner, which grow out of this, may be removed without any real loss.

Perhaps an excuse should be made for the positive character of the conclusions which are here set forth. I certainly do not wish to appear dogmatic, or to claim for my opinions any greater value than they possess. But it has seemed to me that the danger of leaving too strong an impression of the authoritative nature of the particular conclusions advanced is more than counterbalanced by the opposite danger, in case one tries to be too objective in his tone, of leaving no unified impression at all. An introductory treatment of philosophical problems which does not lead up to positive and constructive results is apt, I think, to be unsatisfactory, especially to the reader who has no previous acquaintance with the subject, and whose interest has to a considerable extent still to be

aroused. The real end at which such a book should aim is undoubtedly the understanding of problems, but this end may be best attained by bringing to bear upon the problems some definite point of view. Then whether the student accepts the particular solution or not, he has at least a well-defined starting-point for his own inquiry.

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INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

NO man who is able to learn from experience at all, can live very long in the world without finding himself continually passing judgment, in one way or another, on the meaning and the value of life. At the very least there will be some things which it will seem to him to be worth the while to do, and other things, again, which will fail to interest him, and which by implication therefore he will condemn; but besides such fragmentary and instinctive judgments, he also, if he reflects at all, can hardly help but ask himself at times whether life has not some meaning as a whole, which would serve to throw light on the scattered and chaotic fragments of his everyday experience, and bring them

into some degree of unity. Now philosophy, apart from technicalities of definition, is nothing but an attempt, in a reasoned and comprehensive way, to answer this question, What is the meaning of life? Every one, therefore, in so far as he adopts a certain general attitude towards the problems that meet him, looks at them from a certain point of view, and does not simply let himself drift from one experience to another without any purpose or unity to connect them, is taking the standpoint of philosophy. Such an attitude we call his philosophy of life, and if he is more or less clearly conscious of what this attitude is, and is able to express it in a unified and consistent way, we say in a popular sense that he is a philosopher. Technical philosophy differs from this only in the fact that it tries to do thoroughly, and in full consciousness of itself, what in popular thinking we do in a loose and unsystematic fashion. Instead of picking out those factors in life which

appeal to us more personally and directly, it tries to set individual prejudices and limitations aside, and to include, as impartially as it can, all the elements which experience presents. It is true that in doing this it frequently gets far enough from what seem to be living interests; but back of all technical discussions, there is still the underlying conviction that by this path, and this alone, can we get at the vital and essential meaning of the world, or else we have no longer philosophy, but mere pedantry and hair-splitting. It is natural, then, that we should find the definitions which men have given of philosophy at different times are not by any means the same. They are not the same because, under different circumstances, men's interests are directed to different points, now to the importance of conduct, now to the nature of the external world, now to the existence of supersensible realities. But to say that their interest lies at one point or another, is only to say in

other words that here they find the value of life; this is the test that can always be applied, the real motive, if not the apparent one. So we can speak of the philosophy of any pursuit whatever in which men can engage, or of any subject which can occupy them, of science, of history, of the technical arts. Between science and the philosophy of science, history and the philosophy of history, there is indeed no hard and fast separation; but what in the one case we are specially concerned with is the positive nature and the laws of a certain group of facts, which have been selected out from the rest of the world to be studied by themselves, while in the other we restore that connection with the whole which for the time being we had set aside, and try to look at our facts in the light of the meaning which they have for life in its entirety.

Even when it is stated in this preliminary way, the definition which has been given of philosophy will be seen to have

a bearing on the disputes which have been common about the value of the study, and the very unequal estimation in which it has been held. There are many people to whom the pursuit of philosophy has seemed to be, at best, of very doubtful utility. Sometimes it is one who, like Matthew Arnold, is so impressed with the concrete values of art and conduct that the world of the philosopher seems to him abstract and barren in comparison. More often it is the man of science, who feels that he has got hold of reality so immediately and palpably in the world of matter, and of reality which is so far-reaching in its significance, that he has no interest left to give the supersensuous and very doubtful world which he understands that philosophy is trying to construct by merely thinking about it. Now the answer to be made the scientist is this, that he is not getting along without philosophy, as he supposes, but only is adopting one particular kind of philosophy, whose im-

plications, however, he does not try to understand. And he can hardly hold that this refusal to examine into the presuppositions of his thinking is, in opposition to the metaphysician's course, a highly meritorious thing, without stultifying his whole scientific procedure. He may, indeed, as a scientist, merely devote himself to the discovery of facts; but unless he is prepared to say that the bare objective fact is everything, and its meaning, its value for us, is nothing (which is very like a contradiction in terms), he cannot avoid encroaching on the philosopher's field. In reality he always does bring with him his own interpretation of the facts of science, and they differentiate the way in which he looks at the world from the way in which other men look at it; the only question is as to whether this should be conscious and thoroughgoing, or whether it should be unconscious, and unaware of the possible difficulties that may be involved. In any case the mere facts of the

objective world, as objective, cannot exhaust the problems which arise, and arise necessarily, for this external world would not exist, for us, if it did not have a value as coming within our conscious life, and so it forms but a part of experience, not the whole. Whatever it may be in itself, for human interest at least the objective fact or law as such cannot possibly be a final and sufficient goal. Even the man who thinks that it is so, must have some reason why the search for objective truth appeals to him; its simple existence in itself does not explain why he should want to know it. It may of course be that, in the end, one might be driven to admit that no vital relation to human life could be discovered; in that case science at once would cease to be pursued. But answerable or not, at least it cannot be said that when the problems go beyond mere scientific matter of fact they cease to have any *interest* for us; knowing the chemical composition of water will not satisfy us in face

of the larger question, What is this world of which our lives form a part? what is its meaning and destiny? And it is through philosophy, not through science, that this latter question must receive an answer, if it is answered at all.

Nevertheless there is some justification for this contemptuous attitude which science is apt to adopt towards philosophy, and which grows out of the true feeling that any value which is really worth our consideration must attach to the actual world in which we live, not to some far-away abstract world, which only can be got at by the occasional philosopher, and through the colorless medium of thought. What we are after is the meaning of life as we live it, and if we come out at the end with something that finds no place for the concrete values with which we are familiar, then certainly a large factor in the problem has without any justification been juggled out of sight. So that we have to insist, in the second

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place, that the data which the philosopher uses are not something which, by a pure act of intellectual creation, he spins out of his own head, but the same facts with which science, and history, and everyday living, deal. In this sense, therefore, the philosopher is dependent on the scientist; he cannot go his own way and construct his world *a priori*, but he must continually be falling back upon the concrete knowledge which science represents. So, also, philosophy does not "give us God, freedom, immortality," if by this we mean that it somehow puts us in possession of values which we had not before suspected. Religion, morality, the social life, all come before philosophy, and are presupposed by it; and philosophy, in turn, in so far as it is only a bare recognition of truths, and not a vital appreciation of them, in so far as it stops with itself as mere knowing, and does not hand back the material which it has been elaborating intellectually, to the immediate experience

in which this originated, is forgetting its place as the handmaid of life, and so is rendering itself barren and formal. All that philosophy can do is to take the actual values which come to us in experience, work out their implications and their mutual relationships, and, it may be, get at some unitary point of view, from which each element can be looked at, and have full justice done it. But by this very process it will be making a positive addition to the value of experience itself, not by creating truths which are entirely new, but by clearing up and throwing new light upon the meaning which already has been present in our lives, and so making it more real to us.

And this will also serve to indicate the answer to a very common complaint against philosophy, in which it is set over against feeling, as something quite opposed. It is common to hear people say, After all, it is feeling truth, not reasoning about it, which is the impor-

tant thing; and philosophy, by translating everything over into the cold and impersonal medium of thought, and by introducing all sorts of doubts and limitations, is a foe to that immediate enjoyment of truth which alone is worth the having. Whether this is true or not depends entirely on what we mean by it. If we mean by feeling unintelligent, blind feeling, just the mere confused sense of satisfaction, it is not true at all. But this is not what we mean when we speak of feeling as it is aroused by poetry or art: that is equivalent rather to insight, intelligent appreciation. It is, therefore, not something which is opposed to reason, but its highest, most immediate exercise. But here again we shall be doing an injustice if we oppose immediacy too sharply to the more laborious and reflective work of thought. It is not philosophy which comes in to spoil the fineness of the enjoyment we get in immediate feeling, but it is the fact that feeling

breaks down, and will no longer satisfy us, that compels us to betake ourselves to thought. Feelings are sure to clash, and then they possess no criterion within themselves which shall say whether this feeling or that one is the truer; merely as feeling they cannot tell us whether they are valid objectively, or whether we are only deluding ourselves with subjective emotions. To compare their values, and to bring them to the test of their consonancy with the whole of life, thought is needed; but that does not mean that we pass from immediate experience to something higher, thought; it means that, through thought, we get from an immediacy which is limited and partial, to one which is truer, richer, and more inclusive.

Now systems of philosophy are simply attempts to get at a unified way of looking at things, and in the following pages we shall have to consider how such systems have grown up, and what are the

particular problems they have set themselves to solve. And in a general way we may say that they all of them have to do with a few very simple-looking assumptions, which every one is accustomed to make, and which are so natural that when our attention is first called to them we hardly see how anybody can be so foolish as to bring them into question. We all feel very sure, that is, that out there in space a lot of things exist, — trees, stones, houses, — which we know are there because we see them when we open our eyes, and touch them when we stretch out our hands. To be sure, we are not looking at them all the time, but that makes no difference to the things themselves; they still are there, whether we see them or not. Then again we are sure that we ourselves exist. If we were asked to define this "self," we might indeed have difficulty in determining just in what it consisted, but in general it is that which thinks and feels, has sensa-

tions and desires, and acts according to conscious purposes, none of which attributes are we ready to suppose belong to things in the external world. Finally, it is not only my own self that I believe in, but I am just as firmly convinced of the existence of other selves, with whom I am continually in communication. These three assumptions it never enters into the head of the ordinary man to doubt.

Now in these beliefs, on which every one, including the philosopher himself, continually is acting, there are involved the various problems of philosophy, even the most abstract. This world of men and things which we assume seems clear and unambiguous in its nature only so long as we refrain from thinking about it; a very little consideration shows the necessity of defining more exactly in what the reality of these things consists, how they are to be thought. In so far as philosophy has this problem, of deter-

mining the true nature of the real, it is called Ontology. If we start by assuming the separation between mind and matter, we must ask precisely what it is we mean by these two terms, and then the more they seem to differ from and exclude each other, the more insistent becomes the problem as to how that still more basal form of reality is to be conceived, which shall restore the unity of which philosophy is in search. But things not only exist, they have a history; and this brings us into still more evident contact with the practical values of experience. For any inquiry into the laws which govern the history of the material world, into the nature and connection of the world processes, raises at once and inevitably the question, what relation these have to our own conscious lives and purposes, whether they are mechanical merely, and indifferent to human interests, or whether something in the nature of meaning and aim can be de-

tected in them. This in general is the field of Cosmology. But now the fact that we started with individuals more or less distinct from the world, gives rise to a third set of problems. It is soon apparent that we cannot talk about the nature of reality, without also giving some account of the source from which we get our knowledge, a problem which again becomes more difficult, the more we insist upon the separation between the knower and the object which is known. An answer to this question, What is the nature of knowledge? or How is knowledge possible? constitutes Epistemology.

Of course it would be a mistake to suppose that these three provinces of philosophy deal with problems that are in any strict sense distinct; in reality it is all the while a single problem which we are approaching from different sides. That problem is, to get some way of looking at things as a whole, some

unitary conception which shall find a place for the actual facts of life, and by reference to which we may have some reasonable ground for believing that these facts possess real validity and worth. Philosophical systems are simply the most general points of view from which this unity has been sought. What we shall attempt, then, in the following pages, will be to consider some of the reasons for, and some of the objections to, those general standpoints which differentiate one philosophical system from another, and to show how they are connected with and grow out of one another. We shall deal, that is, with what perhaps may best be called Metaphysics, without attempting to say much about the more detailed problems of the special philosophical disciplines, — Ethics, Psychology, Logic, and the like. Metaphysics can, indeed, only receive body and content as it is worked out into these details, and the latter may frequently be decisive in lead-

ing us to one standpoint rather than another. But nevertheless this general standpoint is a perfectly definite thing, which, consciously or unconsciously, affects profoundly the treatment of special problems; and logically it precedes the latter, as the presupposition under which the data for their solution take shape. It is, therefore, extremely important for us, even as psychologists and logicians, to understand the nature of these presuppositions, and not to let them remain hidden and unclarified, in which case they are likely to confuse both ourselves and others. The task of clarifying them is what philosophy, as general philosophy, or Metaphysics, undertakes to perform.

DUALISM, PANTHEISM, AND THEISM

DUALISM, PANTHEISM, AND THEISM

THE problems which commonly fall under the head of Metaphysics are practically bound up in this one comprehensive question, What is the fundamental nature of reality, of the universe in which we are placed? for such a question is essentially involved in any attempt to determine what our relations to the world are, either in the way of knowledge or of action. However much metaphysical inquiries may seem to lead from the region of concrete interests, yet it is evident we cannot proceed very far towards the understanding of any fact of experience, until this question has found some sort of answer, if not as an explicit theory,

at least as an unformulated attitude towards life, which governs our thinking without our being conscious of it.

In so far as men are able to live simply and unreflectively, we have no reason to suppose that life presents to them any of those antitheses and dualisms into which it is split up for more reflective minds, and which give philosophy its excuse for being. Much the same thing is true, probably, in the case of the child. Life for him is harmonious and a whole; the external world enters into his experience simply as an instrument for carrying out what he wants to do, and so long as he is able thus to satisfy approximately his interests and desires, there is no need that he should puzzle himself any further about the nature of the things which form a part of his life; their existence is summed up for him in the service they perform. But this active realization of the unity of life does not long

remain unbroken. As soon as we are forced by the failure of immediate satisfaction into the attitude of thinking about the world, a host of opposing elements at once arise. We think, indeed, for the purpose ultimately of bringing things into harmony, but the immediate result of thought is to set up on a basis of its own what had not previously called any direct attention to itself, and to mark it off from the rest of experience in order to examine it better, as if it had a degree of independence. The most fundamental of these distinctions which thought introduces into experience is that between the external world of matter and the conscious self. Modern philosophy, in agreement here with our ordinary common-sense judgments, starts in with Descartes by accepting the dualism, and thus the nature of the problems with which it has at first to occupy itself is already determined.

There are two questions at least which, on such an assumption, will evidently

need to be answered. How, in the first place, shall we define these two different sorts of reality, mind and matter? what is the precise nature of each, and the peculiarity which distinguishes it from the other? And then, after this is answered, What is the relation between them, the nature of the connection which, in spite of their difference, makes them, after all, elements in a single world? Both these questions may for the present be considered somewhat briefly.

At first glance it would not seem to be a very difficult matter to tell what it is we mean by a "thing"; we have only to point to this or that thing, a stone, or a tree, or a man, and our meaning, we think, is sufficiently clear without the need of further explanation. But philosophy has to justify its meanings in terms of thought, and it is much easier to recognize a thing practically, than to define in what its thing-

hood consists. On the one hand we meet with that characteristic which, as far back as the times of the early Greeks, aroused men's curiosity about the world, and proved the first spur to inquiry that can properly be called philosophic, — the universal flux of things, whereby they pass almost continuously one into another, and, in the shifting play of elements which results, no trace of an abiding reality remains, and no boundaries can be fixed which are not to a greater or less degree arbitrary and uncertain. How can we speak of a thing as the "same," when everything that we know is undergoing a constant process of change? Or, if we turn away from this continual process of transformation, and take some one point in the history of any so-called thing, the unity begins to disappear in another way. About any such "thing" it is possible to make a great variety of statements: the stone is hard, and

round, and smooth, and white, and so we may go on indefinitely; and as regards all these qualities, we think we know pretty much what we mean. But now when we are finished, apparently all that is left on our hands is a mass of different qualities, while the stone itself, the unity which binds them all together into the one thing, has disappeared from view.

It is evident, however, that what we mean by a stone is not simply and solely a list of qualities, hardness and shape and color, but a *something which is* hard and round and white. Back, that is, of all the separate qualities that may be enumerated, we tend to set up an entity of some sort which binds these qualities together, and in which as a unity they inhere. This philosophical conception of an underlying substratum, or substance, of which the different qualities are only phenomenal manifestations, has passed into our current

ways of thinking so completely that it seems a tolerably clear and definite notion. We go to work in precisely the same way when we come to deal with consciousness. If we try to analyze the self and define what it is, all that we seem able to lay hold of definitely, in the way of solid and verifiable fact, is a lot of particular sensations, particular desires, particular feelings, while the unity, as the philosopher Hume clearly pointed out, has a way of slipping through our fingers. But we all feel that the self is a single self, not a mere collection of particular conscious states or acts. Accordingly, just as we place behind the group of qualities a substance to which they belong, so behind the particular elements of consciousness we place a unitary soul, an undefinable substratum with various faculties, which *has* feelings and sensations, *performs* acts, but which is more fundamental than any conscious process, or

collection of conscious processes, which manifests it.

It will not be necessary here to dwell very long upon the details of the problems which have thus been started; it is enough to understand what the conception is, and what in a general way is the nature of the complications to which it gives rise. It is easy to see that such a notion of reality as is involved in the conception of substance, and of soul, is extremely abstract, that it makes reality fixed and static, and that it puts the essence of things in a sphere which is quite inaccessible to human knowledge; and the consequence of this is, that the conception is unable to perform the service which it was designed for. Whatever may seem to be the necessity of holding to the notion of substance, it was already seen by Locke that, as regards the nature of substance, what substance is, we are incapable of forming the slightest idea.

For, of course, if we strip it of all sensible qualities, there are no terms left by which to characterize it. Since we require it in order to get qualities to form a unity, we cannot define it in terms of other qualities, and there is nothing we can say of it except that it is a unity *of* the qualities. But this is purely an abstraction, the mere idea of unity, and does not tell at all in what, concretely, the unity consists; it is the demand we set out with put down as its own solution. And being abstract, it is unable to perform its work of uniting things; if it could, we should never have had the problem in the first place. We cannot leave it, however, as the mere abstraction of unity; that is much too elusive an idea to satisfy us. So what we do practically is to take up again with that uncritical notion of a "thing" which we set out to define, and to combine the notion of abstract unity with this. Substance thus appears as a par-

ticular "something" lying back of its qualities and manifestations, and separate from them; we still continue, that is, to apply to it the general category of a thing, while yet every mark of what we empirically know as things has been stripped from it. But by thus setting it off over against its qualities as a distinct something, a new difficulty has been added; it no longer is necessary to explain simply the relation of the qualities to one another, but there is also their relation to the substance to be accounted for; and the old difficulties, moreover, are still as great as ever. In so far as the substance is in any sense a reality back of, and apart from, its phenomenal appearances, another and a separate fact, which, as it can exist without this or that quality, might conceivably exist without them all, it furnishes not the shadow of an explanation, practically, for the actual qualities and phenomena with which in the real world

we are dealing, and which we are trying to account for; while we have, in addition, that anomaly of a substance of which nothing can be predicated which makes its existence, as a distinct something, conceivable. And, finally, what is closely connected with this, from another standpoint, is the relation of substance to change. What we are after in the concept of substance is that which is identical with itself, the solid and permanent core of reality. But by marking off the permanent and identical element as separate, and making it the fundamental fact of reality, we cease to be able to bring it, for purposes of explanation, into connection with the world of change. If the substance is the basis of, and therefore, in a way, more real than, its changing manifestations, these latter have to be derived from it; but the very insistence upon its permanence and lack of change makes the derivation very difficult, to say the least.

When we turn from the nature of mind and matter in themselves, to the relation that exists between them, a new set of problems arises. Without asking now what substance is as such, we may be satisfied to define any particular substance by the manner in which it expresses itself, its most essential characteristics. And, in a popular way, it is sufficiently exact to say that matter is characterized by extension, and by impenetrability or hardness, while the peculiar characteristic of the soul is consciousness, — thought, sensation, and the like. It is in this way, namely, that ordinary thought is accustomed to distinguish between mind and matter. So far, then, as all the marks which characterize them are concerned, mind and matter are on the face of it utterly different. Mind is never extended, matter is never conscious; what the one is, the other is not. Accordingly, when we ask how it comes about that one can exert an influence

on the other, as, in connection with the activities of the human body, they certainly seem to do, the imagination finds it. hard to picture any way in which this interaction can be effected. On the whole it seems fairly natural that one body should set another in motion, because the nature of both of them is essentially spatial; but when we are told of a motion effected by a thought, which is so very different from motion, we are apt to find the process much more puzzling.

When the objection is put like this, in the form of a difficulty as to just what sort of a thing we are to conceive that connection between mind and body to be, which is involved in the idea of interaction, it is not very hard to show that it fails to be conclusive. It will appear later on that the supposed simplicity of the idea of interaction between two substances of the *same* kind is, after all, more apparent than real. When it

comes to representing to oneself the nature of the connection, an interaction between two bodies is just as difficult to understand as one between a body and a soul; and, consequently, we cannot reject the latter simply because we do not see how it is done. There is, indeed, still a reason, apart from the metaphysical one, why an influence of consciousness upon matter is not so easily to be admitted as the influence of one body on another. It is the working hypothesis of scientific inquiry, based not so much on any *a priori* probabilities as on the actual success which has attended science in the past, that every event in the material world can be sufficiently accounted for on purely physical grounds; and this has been greatly strengthened in later years through the discovery of the very exact equivalency between the amounts of energy represented in the various stages of a physical process, and by the consequent formula-

tion of the important Law of the Conservation of Energy, according to which the energy expended in producing any physical result is not lost, but only changes its form, so that the sum total of energy is never either increased or diminished. It is clear that, if this law is strictly true, the activities of the human body, like any other physical event, must have their complete explanation in the physical world, and cannot be due to the influence of an extra-physical fact like consciousness; and while it is out of the question to think of demonstrating the law in every possible case, yet its great apparent validity wherever it can be tested, and its almost universal acceptance by men of science, make the existence of a mutual influence between mind and body at least a matter for further inquiry. The problem which is involved in this, however, need not be considered now. Granting that the fact of consciousness has some influence

in determining the movements of the body, what is apparent is, that, if we are to make the idea of interaction tenable, we shall require more than the existence of two separate things, whether it be two bodies, or a body and a soul. Any two things which are taken to start with as separate from each other, necessarily require some larger conception if they are to be brought into relation, for a relation implies that, after all, they do come within some kind of a unity, and so that the notion of them severally in their separateness is inadequate to meet the situation. If they were utterly separate in very deed, neither of them could be anything whatever to the other. If, then, we retain the distinction between mind and matter with which we set out, we find it necessary to hunt for some larger and more fundamental reality back of the finite existences we started with, or else give up the hope of finding any unity in the.

world. Such a search may take either one of two directions, which in a rough way may be called the theistic, and the pantheistic, respectively. We may look on individual bodies and souls as brought into being, created, by a reality which thus exists distinct from them, and whose creative power serves as the explanation of their interactions; or we may take these individual things as themselves expressions of, elements in, the total reality of the world ground, which, accordingly, does not give them a separate substantiality, but has its own being wholly summed up *in* them. This last conception will be considered first.

The term Pantheism is one which is used so popularly and loosely, that it is especially necessary to make clear to ourselves just the form of theory we intend to express by it. It might stand for a number of distinguishable views, though these of course shade into one another. In general, a theory would not be called panthe-

ism, or monism, which gave to finite things, whether bodies or conscious selves, any degree of substantial independence. Nevertheless there is a constant tendency, in a pantheistic scheme of things, to set off the unitary Being, after all, from the finite and changing world, but to cover up the inconsistency by making this latter *phenomenal*, and consequently something less than real. So here is a chance for ambiguity to be noticed at the start; is the one Being which is to serve as the unity of the world to be regarded as an unknown something back of phenomena, or as itself exhausted in them? On the one hand, if God is all, then finite things must evidently be a part of God, for there is no room for them outside of him. If, however, we take God simply as the sum of finite manifestations, we are only deceiving ourselves in supposing we have attained a unity. For, on the face of them, things are separate and distinct, and especially is this so in the case of consciousness and the external

world: and it is the business of philosophy, not simply to keep reiterating that somehow or other they are a unity, but to arrive at some definite conception which will make that unity thinkable. It is true there is a conception which might seem to be available here, the conception of an all-inclusive *consciousness*, but this is not anything we have a right to use so long as we remain on the level of the presuppositions with which we started. We are supposing that conscious facts, and material facts, are both equally real, and, moreover, that they are not at all alike; and consequently the unity which includes them cannot be something which resembles only one of them. A unity which is made up of both material bodies and conscious selves cannot be spoken of as matter simply, or simply as consciousness; it is only a unity, to repeat, which comes from heaping a mass of things together, and that is no organic unity at all. Accordingly pantheism, at least in this its first phase, is compelled

to make its underlying unity in some degree transcend the finite world, if it is to serve as a unity in any real sense, and so to move in the direction which has already been described in speaking of the concepts of substance and of soul.

Now along this path there is an easy approach to the conclusions of the pantheist. It seemed to be necessary to admit the existence of substance, in order to bring the different qualities into connection, and of a soul, to do the same office for the elements of the conscious life. But these two series have themselves also to be joined. Now as soon as substance begins to be thought of as existing independently of its qualities, we are compelled to recognize that of its nature as thus existing by itself nothing whatever is known; and the same thing is true of the soul as well. If, then, nothing is known of the reality underlying the phenomena of matter and of mind, we no longer have any reason for assert-

ing that the reality is different in the two cases; they may just as easily be the expression of a single reality, or substance, as of two. This is not to break down the distinction between mind and matter as attributes, or phenomena; as such they are altogether unlike. But so are the attributes which we are accustomed to assign to a unitary thing in the external world, — color, *e.g.*, and sound. And if the underlying substance is really to serve as a principle of unity, it is not only possible thus to give up the independent substantial existence of matter and of soul, but we seem by all means to be driven to it, under penalty of adding arbitrarily to the number of distinct existences which it is our problem to unite.

There is another result of this conception which calls for a passing notice. If mind and matter are only different expressions of an underlying unity, it no longer is necessary to think of them as exercising a mutual influence on each

other. This is the solution which Spinoza gives to the problem of interaction between body and soul. We find a certain relation between the series of material changes in the body, and the series of conscious events, but this is not due to the fact that the mind moves the body, or that the body causes sensations to arise in consciousness: such a relation is only what we should expect if both series are but differing expressions of one and the same real existence. Each series is, then, shut up entirely within itself, so far as the other is concerned; the explanation of their relationship is to be looked for in the ultimate unity of which they are parallel, but in nature essentially different, manifestations.

In a general way such a conception as has just been stated already has come in for criticism. As soon as we start to make the ultimate reality a some*thing* distinct from its attributes, we are separating it from the world of finite occur-

rences, and rendering it useless as an explanation of them. If the essence of reality is this permanent, unchanging, indeterminate background, how does it bring about the world of change, of the interplay of transient qualities, which we know? If change and finiteness do not belong to the inner reality of the world, what sort of an existence have they? logically we ought to deny them altogether, and that is a pretty difficult thing to do. On the other hand, if we do bring them within the sacred calm of the identical unitary Being, we have got to show how they are consistent with this, or else give up our unity. If, to repeat, we put the reality of existence back of finite things, we cut them off from reality, and thus make them quite inexplicable; if we identify reality with them, we are left with a mere jumble of conflicting particulars, which no amount of calling a unity will really make so for the understanding.

It must be remembered that this criticism is based upon the ordinary point of view, that both finite things and minds have at least some measure of reality in themselves. There are, however, two different standpoints which, in pantheistic theories, are easily confused with this, and so serve to make the difficulties less apparent. Conceivably it might be maintained, as was suggested only a few lines back, that the finite is an out-and-out illusion, that it simply does not exist. Such a mystic pantheism is not unknown in the history of philosophy, but it cannot be soberly defended, of course. The *appearance* of change and finiteness is at least not to be disputed, and this admission carries with it essentially the whole problem. Calling a thing an appearance does not thereby get rid of it altogether, and reduce it to bare nothingness; and so long as appearances are changing, we cannot declare that we have eliminated all change whatever from

the universe, and still retain any meaning to language. But the word "appearance" suggests still another view of the matter, which is much more definite and comprehensible. We may say, that is, that the known qualities of things are only effects, *in us*, of the unknown reality back of them, ways in which this appears *to us*, and that they are subjective therefore, and do not belong at all to the real nature of that which appears. In the first case finite things were declared to be absolutely non-existent; now they are admitted to exist, but only as subjective appearances, effects of a separate and unknown real. In this manner we at least are able to give an intelligible meaning to the separation of the unitary substance from the finite world of phenomena, and can give each its due. But whether this can be carried out successfully or not, at any rate it is not to be identified with monism, without further explanation at least. For evidently it

involves not only something which appears, but also something to which it appears, not one reality, but two; the conflict between the reality and finite existence is resolved only by allowing the latter a separate subjective existence, and so by giving up the doctrine that God is all. The two standpoints, however, are continually playing more or less into each other's hands, and they will have to be spoken of again.

The great advantage which pantheism represents, from the philosophic standpoint, is this, that it substitutes for the very difficult conception of an interaction between separate realities, which have to be brought together from the outside, an interaction of parts within a whole. If in this way we make the whole our starting-point, and recognize that no part of this has any rights except as it expresses the working of the whole, we can see more clearly how it might be that, in this mutual adjustment of elements, one change should

be conditioned by another, whereas we could not comprehend such an interaction when we started with the elements as if they were complete each in itself. But when we come to ask just in what the nature of this unity consists, pantheism has thus far failed to give an answer. We may turn, then, to the theistic solution of the difficulty, in the form in which it is most commonly to be met with, and which, as the semi-official philosophy of religion, is familiar to most of us, perhaps as the most natural way of regarding the world. There is a slight ambiguity in speaking of this as theism, for it is in reality only one form of it; accordingly that which follows must be understood to be directed, not against theism as such, but only against the special form in which it leaves us with three distinct factors of existence, — material things, conscious beings, and, as a third reality which creates and directs them, God. There has been a great deal of discussion, which still continues up to the

present day, as to just the value of the arguments which, starting from the conception of the world as it comes to us in ordinary experience, attempt to prove that the existence of a creative and overruling Providence is an indispensable requirement for any satisfactory explanation of things. It will be sufficient to call attention to two or three of the most essential considerations that are involved in this discussion, without attempting to treat it in very great detail. In one point, theism would seem to be, on the purely philosophical side, at a disadvantage as compared with the pantheistic theory, in that, as finite things are no longer, in the ordinary sense, a part of God, we are led back, apparently, to the conception of an interaction between separate things. This difficulty theism seeks to obviate by subordinating matter, so far as its origin goes at least, to conscious spirit, and by regarding it as brought into existence by divine power. And by this means, though in a

less obvious way, theism might perhaps still retain, after all, that concept of the mutual relation of parts within a whole to which the necessity of explaining how interaction is possible appeared to lead; for while finite things are not, according to it, a part of God's being directly, they are finally dependent upon it, and, through the medium of his creative power, they come within the unity of the purposes which make up his life. Of course the notion of creative power, directed according to conscious purpose, has been substituted here for the immediate inclusion of elements within a whole which they directly and exclusively constitute; still it is not clear that the unity which this involves is not sufficient to make the idea of interaction intelligible. But when we try to apply this to the material world, there are peculiar difficulties in the way. It is quite impossible to get any idea of the rationale of the process by which spirit can bring into existence a substance

wholly distinct in characteristics from itself, and then can deal with it after it is created, though of course it might be answered that we cannot expect to understand how everything is done. Perhaps not; but the whole problem is not unanswerable merely, it is confusing: how, for instance, are we to understand the relation of God to space? Real matter necessitates real space, and God is thus brought into relation to an endless spatial world which exists outside him, and so would seem to furnish him all the difficulties which infinite space presents to our thought. But what is perhaps the most fatal difficulty is our utter inability to see what this supposed matter can be like, thus set up in business for itself. Here we trench upon another field of philosophy, that which has been called epistemology; and as this has still to be examined in more detail, the point may be reserved for the following chapter. But it may be said, summarily, that the difficulty lies in

this. We cannot conceive of matter except in terms of conscious experience; every quality we ascribe to it is, when looked at in another way, a conscious quality, a product of sensation or of thought. Consequently, when we are asked to conceive what the nature of this created matter is wholly by itself, apart from consciousness, we are set upon an impossible task.[1]

As this consideration introduces us to the province of epistemology, so the second difficulty to be mentioned involves the problem of cosmology. And here we have to face an extremely vital question, which concerns the entire existence of meaning, or purpose, in the world. Theism, of course, maintains that the world is governed by intelligence, and in general it adduces two main arguments to support its view. The first is the more abstract one, and is based on the idea of causation. It is said that, by a necessity of reason, every event that takes place in

[1] See p. 73.

the world must be traced back to some preceding cause; but this, while it may account well enough for each event in particular, will evidently not account for the world as a whole. For we never are able in this way to get to any first cause, but are driven back and back continually in an endless series. Since, however, such an infinite series is unthinkable, we must admit at some point an absolute first cause, which is itself uncaused. That this cause is intelligent, again, is sought to be proved by the second argument, which points out the actual evidences of design in the universe. Such instances of design — the eye made for seeing, the ear for hearing, and the like — are perfectly familiar to all, and certainly they have a good deal of popular evidence in their favor.

As far as the first of these arguments is concerned, it is enough to suggest two or three objections which have been brought against it. It is a doubtful piece of logic to argue from the absolute neces-

sity of a cause in every case, to the existence of an absolute beginning, which does not need a cause; nor can we quite safely get the infinite conclusion with which we bring up, out of premises which are strictly finite. Furthermore, it is always open, in a case where we are arguing on the basis of an abstract truth like the law of causation, to ask what proof we have of the absolute necessity of our law, upon which everything depends; and to answer this we have either to enter on a particularly abstruse metaphysical inquiry, or else fall back on the appeal to self-evidence, which, as the history of philosophy has shown again and again, is very likely to be an appeal to custom and tradition. But the point which is especially to be emphasized is this, — and it applies to both arguments alike, — that in so far as, on this showing, intelligence enters in, it is in the form of a distinct and supplementary power. There are a certain number of

facts that can be explained by mechanism, by natural laws; teleology appears only where mechanism breaks down. It is just as in the case of human workmanship: the tree is a natural process, explainable by its own laws, but when the carpenter begins to work upon the tree, a new factor is introduced which, from the standpoint of the laws which govern the tree's growth, is not natural at all. A very similar statement can be made about the argument from cause: the string of events is quite explainable on natural grounds until we reach the end, and then a wholly new power is appealed to, which cannot be stated in scientific terms.

Now in so far as the dispute between the mechanical and the teleological explanation of the world is based upon this idea, that some things can be explained in terms of mechanism, *i.e.*, in the large sense, of natural law, while others demand a higher explanation, a direct appeal to purpose or design, it is simply a

fact of history that the principle of teleology has tended to be more and more displaced by the other. Science has steadily proceeded on the theory that for everything a natural explanation is to be looked for, in terms of physical law; and its justification has been in its success. One sphere after another has been brought under the sway of scientific method, and since the last great step in advance, the establishment of the principle of evolution, there are few scientists who do not have a well-earned confidence that, in the end, no phenomenon in the universe will remain outside the sphere of universal law. Of course this cannot be demonstrated in any strict logical sense, and the scientist who tried to do that would misunderstand his business. It is, however, a well-grounded conviction, based on the whole history of science; and the attempt to dispute it is coming more and more to be felt as a difficult, if not a desperate, undertaking.

In so far as teleology means a breaking into what would otherwise have been the natural order of events, by a separate and transcendent power, whose workings cannot be reduced to strictly scientific formulæ, it has the whole weight of scientific achievement against it. And if, as we said at starting, philosophy is an attempt, not to reason out a scheme of the universe on the basis of certain abstract truths, but to account for the facts of life in their entirety, then no philosophy can fail to recognize the great body of facts which science represents, and still perform its function. We must either drop the notion of end altogether, or else we must adopt some new conception of what end, or design, means, and of how it works.

MATERIALISM AND SUBJECTIVE IDEALISM

MATERIALISM AND SUBJECTIVE IDEALISM

IN the preceding chapter we had to consider how the attempt to get at a conception which shall explain things as a unity, gives rise to the categories of substance and of soul, which, however, prove, when they are examined, to be much too abstract and rigid to perform their office with any degree of success. The necessity, again, of bringing the two sets of facts which these concepts represent themselves into connection, revealed other difficulties, and forced us to the recognition that interaction, not only between unlike things, but between any two things at all, requires the conception of a larger unity in which the interacting things exist, not indepen-

dently, but as in some way elements. Pantheism took up this conception of finite things as elements within a whole, but the unity which it supplied turned out to be abstract and verbal merely. Theism furnished a somewhat more definite conception, but when we came to consider the notion of created matter with greater care, it presented serious difficulties, while in so far as theism postulates the presence of intelligence or design in the universe, it seemed to conflict with the results of scientific method. Accordingly, it seemed necessary either to drop the conception of design altogether, or else conceive of its relation to mechanism in some more organic way.

The first of these alternatives is adopted by a philosophy which, by reason of its great apparent simplicity, and of the support which it appears to receive from the most tangible and seemingly self-evident facts of human experience, those with which science deals, has always ex-

erted an extraordinary attraction on a certain type of mind. This is the philosophical attitude of Materialism. The materialist would, indeed, usually object to having himself called a philosopher. He rather prides himself on sticking to obvious and self-evident facts, as opposed to the oversubtilty of theorists who are trying somehow to get behind the facts, and to exalt above them figments of their own creation. But it is evident that, in spite of this, the materialist is a philosopher without his knowing it. He is taking one attitude towards the world out of a number which are possible — the most obvious and natural attitude, it may perhaps be, but at least not the only conceivable one. And the fact, if it be a fact, that it is the first standpoint that one tends to adopt when he begins to think about reality, certainly is not enough to exempt the position from examination and criticism: that is a stand which the scientist of all men could least afford to

take, for he cannot advance a step without overturning obvious and received opinions. Materialism is, therefore, by no means a self-evident theory, but requires definite proof.

Now the materialist attempts to give this proof, not by examining his presuppositions, but by appealing to the admitted facts of science: the latter constitutes the strength, the former the weakness of his position. For there can be no doubt that, in so far as materialism is a mere statement of scientific method, a recognition of the necessity of bringing everything under natural law, it has been of the greatest value in the history of thought. The scientist in his practical procedure, in so far as he is merely a scientist, is necessarily a materialist; he has no court of appeal except to facts which reach him through the senses; he has no laws or forces which he is justified in calling to his aid except those which are expressed in natural

phenomena. But the scientist as such is not pretending to give a final account of the world, but only of the way in which a certain particular group of phenomena acts. The materialist, as the upholder of a philosophical theory, now takes these laws which the scientist discovers, and expressly puts them forward, not simply as true, but as the whole of truth, its final statement. He shows how one by one those facts which men had thought to be anomalous, and to require the working of a higher power to account for them, have been explained without recourse to any such hypothesis, until now, if we grant the existence of particles of matter which are moving in relation to one another with velocities that can be reduced to an exact quantitative expression, we have all the data necessary to account for the most complicated events. Of course literally this is not yet true, but every year makes it more nearly true, and the scientist has faith

to believe that conceivably he might get a formula which, if he could know the exact state of the world at any one moment, would enable him to forecast the entire future course of events with mathematical certainty, since by the subjection of every particle of matter to the undeviating laws of mechanical interaction, the future depends upon the past with the inevitableness of fate. The great stumbling-block which was formerly supposed to lie in the way of such an explanation, in the marvellous adaptations that meet us in organic life, has been removed by the theory of evolution. If, so the materialist thinks, we admit the action of the environment in selecting out from a multitude of minute and indeterminate variations, those which are useful to the organism, through the process of exterminating such individuals as fail to possess these, and so are handicapped in the struggle for existence, and if in addition we grant the influence of hered-

ity in transmitting these favorable variations by a cumulative process, we are in a position to explain all the adaptations of organic structure, without the necessity of appealing to intelligence. Since therefore, as he supposes, the existence of matter in motion is an undoubted fact, the hypothesis of a God, or of intelligence, is no longer needed by him, and must simply be allowed to drop away. It is the product of a prescientific age, formulated to explain facts that could not otherwise be accounted for; now that we can explain the facts without going outside material forces whose existence every one admits, the hypothesis ceases even to be plausible.

But what are we to say of those facts which apparently are so unlike material processes, the facts of consciousness? These also, says the materialist, can be accounted for as the results of material conditions; and he proceeds to bring forward the numerous indications of the

close and immediate connection between the conscious life and the material body. The facts are known to every one, and are sufficiently striking. Consciousness only makes its appearance when the body and the brain have reached a certain stage of development; it varies with the physical condition of the body, with health and sickness, sleep and waking, and with all sorts of peculiarities of structure; and, finally, when the organic structure of the body goes to pieces, consciousness straightway disappears. Any book on psychology or physiology will furnish a multitude of examples, and every day the tendency is growing stronger in the direction of finding a physical process for every conscious one, and of making this series of nervous changes on the physical side a continuous chain, complete within itself, which finds its sufficient explanation without going outside the physical realm. Consciousness, then, says the materialist, must be looked on as merely a product, or a

function, of matter, a secretion of the brain as bile is a secretion of the liver; it is a mere transitory phase of existence, entirely unreal as compared with the permanent ground from which it springs.

And yet these arguments, apparently so strong, fall away on the most casual examination of their presuppositions. What is it, then, that the materialist means by consciousness? Often he appears to mean that consciousness itself *is* matter. But if he means this, he simply does not understand what he is saying. For if he understands by matter what other people do, something which has the qualities of shape, and impenetrability, and movement in space, then a sensation or a feeling does not possess these qualities, and no amount of verbal identification can make them do so. What he really has to mean when he is pressed down to it is, that consciousness is a *product* of matter, but a product which is different in nature from the source from which it springs.

But then the analogies which he uses to express the relation no longer will apply. A product of material processes, in the sense in which bile is a product of the liver, is itself matter; a function of such processes, the function, say, of the heart, involves nothing but the heart itself at work, and performing a certain part in the economy of the organic system. Consciousness is evidently not represented truly by either of these terms, and the materialist's explanation, consequently, will not apply. He has staked everything on his ability to reduce the whole of existence to terms of matter and motion, and here is an element of existence which remains outside his scheme. All that is left for him to do is to say that the potencies of matter are wholly beyond our power to set a limit to, and that therefore among them there may be the possibility of producing a form of reality apparently so unlike itself as consciousness is. But this is to leave the field of science, and

to do just what the materialist blames the theist for doing, forsake a reasoned explanation, and fall back on an appeal to a mysterious and unknown power. The fact remains that consciousness is something which falls beyond the range of those events which are satisfactorily accounted for as movements of matter, and that it apparently does not enter in at all to that system of mathematically equivalent transformations of energy which forms the basis of a physical explanation. Since, therefore, on the one hand, it refuses to be reduced to matter in motion, and cannot, on the other hand, be pushed aside as a sheer illusion, some other category than that of matter will have to be adopted as our ultimate one, which is broad enough to take consciousness in.

It might be well, also, to point out here a disability under which materialism lies in dealing with the problem of interaction. It was seen in the last chapter

that, if we start with a lot of separate things, the problem of their action on one another becomes very difficult to solve; and that it is only by starting at the other end, and taking the whole, not the separate parts, as our primary data, that we begin to get a basis for understanding it. But materialism does not at all lend itself to this conception which we seem to require if interaction is to be explained; on the contrary, the separation of particles in space which it presupposes is the very essence of exclusiveness, and there does not appear to be any way of thinking of them as a whole, except in so far as they form a mere aggregate, which is not an organic unity, nor indeed a unity at all, except as it is one for some perceiving mind. It is true we try to get them into some sort of connection by using the idea of force as a uniting bond, but it is impossible to explain what we are to understand by this. If force is regarded as an immaterial bond, no one can tell

what we mean by such a bond, which gathers up solid particles of matter and forms them into a unity, to say nothing of the inconsistency of a materialist's appealing to the immaterial; and if force is itself another material something, it will serve no purpose in uniting matter, for it has itself to be brought into unity with matter. But there is another objection to the position of the materialist which by itself, as soon as one comes to understand it, is entirely conclusive; and it is largely due to this that, in spite of the great popular vogue of materialistic theories, it is difficult, if not impossible, to point out a single thinker of any real importance in modern times who has been ready to adopt it in its simplicity. There are two ways in which the objection may be put. If we ask what it is we know about matter, we discover that all our knowledge comes to us through the senses. There is literally no quality which we attribute to it, color, form, hardness, elasticity, which is not

based directly upon a sense quality, and which cannot, when looked at from another standpoint, be put in terms of this. If, that is to say, matter is regarded as something distinct from consciousness, we yet have to admit that it is only through the medium of consciousness that we know anything about matter, and that it is only in terms of conscious sensation that we can describe it. Consciousness is, for us, the ultimate. Instead of its being so, then, as the materialist assumes, that matter is that which is given originally and primarily, and about which there can be no reasonable doubt, it may be argued that just the opposite is true. And we therefore have the double difficulty: that what we were wishing to take as a mere transitory product of matter is the absolute presupposition of the existence of matter, so far as our experience is concerned; and that every quality which we ascribe to matter is, it would seem, after all only the same thing that we otherwise

know as a sensation, so that when we set aside this content, nothing whatever is left.

There is another way in which the same essential difficulty may be put. The real world of the modern materialist, at least, is not the actual world which we see when we look about us, but a highly abstract world of moving atoms, following fixed laws, a world that never can appear to our actual bodily senses, though it is based upon them. In other words, it is a thought world, something which, from its hypothetical atoms and ether to the laws which they follow (what can the material existence of a law mean?), is through and through the product of thought. But thought is the work of intelligence, of spirit, and can no more be caught and fossilized into an unspiritual existence than, outside of Wonderland, the grin can remain behind after the cat has disappeared.

We thus have reached the surprising result, that while we started with the

supposition that nothing exists but matter, we have suddenly found ourselves brought up at the totally opposite conclusion, that nothing exists but mind; from Materialism we have passed to Idealism. The considerations which have just been mentioned suggest, indeed, two somewhat different forms of idealistic theory, but for the present we may confine ourselves to that more obvious form which goes by the name of subjective idealism, and the arguments for which we have already indicated. All that we can experience immediately, it is said, is our own states of consciousness; matter, as something which exists beyond consciousness, is simply an inference which is built upon the data of these sensations. It seems, indeed, almost self-evident that *we* can experience directly nothing which is not *our* experience; and if matter has also an existence of its own, there must be some bridge required to get us to it

which is not needed in the case of our own conscious life. If, therefore, matter can be entirely reduced to terms of our sensations, which are the indubitable facts whose existence alone is given directly, and if the concept of matter, as something opposed to consciousness, is now deprived of all content except a conscious content, and so we are left with no way of conceiving what it can be by itself, why should we not throw matter overboard entirely, and content ourselves with the only facts which can be verified? It is, indeed, generally agreed that what are called the secondary qualities of matter — color, sound, smell, and the like — are thus subjective affections of our own; but it is impossible to stop here, for the same arguments apply with precisely the same force to the so-called primary qualities as well, which are popularly supposed to belong to matter in itself, — extension, *i.e.*, and impenetrability. These also certainly are made known

to us through sense perception; why, then, should we suppose that they have any existence except as they are sensibly perceived, any more than the color or fragrance of the rose exists when no one is there to experience it? — an idea which science has long ago exploded. Indeed, what possible conception can we form of a sense quality which has an existence when it is not perceived? If we hold to the fact that all our supposed knowledge of the qualities of matter comes to us through sensation, can we still retain the belief that these sense qualities give us information about a material something beyond themselves, unless we admit the apparent contradiction that a sensation may resemble that of which it is an essential determination that it is not a sensation? We have already seen that the substance which underlies what we call qualities of an objective thing is confessedly beyond our knowledge, and therefore utterly useless. If, then, it is

inconceivable in itself, and of no account in explaining other things, why not get rid of it altogether? Matter, accordingly, would not exist, but only selves, with a succession of conscious states, or sensations.

Most probably our first tendency on hearing an argument of this sort is to follow the illustrious example of Dr. Johnson, and proceed to kick a post, or do something equally violent, in order to prove irrefutably that solid matter cannot be so easily gotten rid of. But the argument, it is to be noticed, does not by any means imply that because what we call matter is only our own sensations, we can therefore have at any time any sensation we please; and consequently the fact that the particular kind of sensation which we can have depends on conditions to a large extent independent of our own arbitrary will, is no argument against the theory. In Berkeley, who represents the classic expression of

this type of idealism, there is a perfectly clear recognition of this element of experience, and it is even made an essential part of his theory. Evidently the string of sensations of which each of us is conscious, is not sufficient to account satisfactorily for itself; but instead of falling back on a conception like that of matter, which is unthinkable and contradictory, Berkeley appeals to the idea of God. It is essential, that is, to have some ulterior reality in order to account for the sensations in oneself; and by thinking of this reality as a conscious being, we avoid the necessity of postulating any other kind of existence than the one whose possibility we have already guaranteed in our own self-knowledge. It is God's power, then, which causes our sensations to be arranged in the particular order which they follow. That the sensation of stretching forth the arm is followed by a sensation of pressure, is not due to the existence of an actual

object out in space, but to the fact that God has made it necessary for these two sensations to go together. The content, then, of the external world is due to our sensations; but the order and necessary connection which it shows depend upon the immediate will of God.

Perhaps no theory in the history of speculation which is on the face of it so paradoxical, and so subversive of ordinary common-sense opinions, has had so great an influence as Bishop Berkeley's subjective idealism. Even men who have been far from accepting its conclusions have pronounced its reasoning unanswerable, and in general its opponents have made but little attempt to point out wherein the fallacy consists, and have contented themselves with calling attention to the absurdities, practical and otherwise, to which, if adopted, it will lead. In the present chapter we shall consider merely this negative side, leaving to another connection the attempt to show more

positively the point at which the argument for subjective idealism goes astray. It may be said, in the first place, that whether the theory is true or not, it is at any rate so far principally destructive, and fails to give any clear explanation of the positive fact of experience with which it started. That fact was the apparent difference between material things and mental states. Granting that the difference is only apparent, yet a complete theory must at least account for the persistency of the illusion. The fact, however, that has been of most weight in recent times in making men unwilling to accept Berkeleyanism, in spite of its theoretical clearness and attractiveness, is probably this, that it seems to be destructive of all that vast framework of scientific achievement which is the most characteristic product of our century. If sensations are produced directly by the power of God, then it is difficult to see what function is left for all the intricate machinery

of forces and molecular structures by which science explains the phenomenal world. And yet the work of science cannot be simply thrust aside; and when it comes to choosing between the solid and lasting results which it has won, and what on the other hand is apt to seem a speculative subtilty, sober common sense is likely to prefer the former. Since, however, in a speculative way, the arguments for idealism cannot be overthrown, the result has frequently been a curious wavering between two extremes, each of which is held according to the needs of the moment, but each of which is in reality destructive of the other. A scientific explanation of sensation is sought in the function of the nervous system, which in this instance is taken as a reality that must exist before sensation can come into being. But then, again, when we ask how this nervous system is known, it is admitted that it is nothing but a lot of sensations or possible sensations. Evidently,

then, unless we are to move in an eternal circle, we must consider more carefully the process by which these contradictory conclusions have been reached.

RATIONALISM AND SENSATIONALISM

RATIONALISM AND SENSATIONALISM

WHEN the difficulties which centre about the attempt to combine two quite different kinds of reality in a unitary world become evident, the most obvious way out of them is by trying to take one of the two things which have to be united as alone representing reality, and then to reduce the other to it. This attempt we have had to consider in the last chapter, and so far it has not proved successful. Materialism represents a real advance in scientific method, but fails to meet the requirements of an ultimate theory. If we take matter as the only real thing, then consciousness refuses to be reduced

to it, to say nothing of the fact that the concept of matter is not a concept of unity, but of plurality. When we try, on the other hand, to reduce matter to mind, the process is much more simple; but we have to face the result that apparently we have thrown overboard in the operation a great number of things which we can hardly afford to lose. If we examine the point to which we have thus been led, it will be evident that the stress of the problem has shifted from the field of ontology or cosmology, to that of epistemology. Before we can proceed further in determining what the nature of reality is, it seems that we shall have to take account more minutely and carefully than we have done so far of the process of knowledge itself, for in the case of everything that is known, the act of knowing is of course always implied. In Berkeley's case, it is true, the ontological interest is still uppermost. Berkeley is interested primarily to prove that a certain supposed

kind of reality, matter, does not, in point of fact, exist in the way we are inclined to think it does; and it is only as a way of approach to this that he enters into an examination of the conditions involved in a knowledge of matter. Epistemology is still an incident, then, not an end in itself. But with Berkeley's great successor, Hume, the purely epistemological inquiry begins to stand more by itself, and centred about it there commences a brilliant philosophical development, which has proved of decisive importance for modern thinking.

If we examine the problem of epistemology more closely, we shall find that there are two pretty distinct questions involved, which are not always clearly distinguished, but which, in reality, need to be treated separately. First there is the question as to what is the source or medium of knowledge; whether, as one school holds, it is given through sensation, or whether there is, besides sensa-

tion, a rational faculty of thought which is a revealer of truth. So far the question is one simply of the process of knowing, which is a process within experience, within *our* experience, as we should be apt to say. But also we are disposed to think that knowledge is always a knowledge of *something*, and that this something which is known is a quite distinct existence from the process of knowing it. The latter is what we call an experience of ours, while the former is not such an experience; it exists somehow for itself, and our experience, whether it is thought of as sensational or as rational, only copies or represents it. In addition, therefore, to the former question, What is the nature, psychologically, of the knowing process as an immediate part of our experience? we also need to ask, How can this immediate experience, sensation or what not, give us information of something that exists independently of it? how is it possible to bridge over

the gap between the fact of experience which we get directly, and that which it represents, if the latter is, in its own proper existence, forever beyond our circle of experience, and so can only be, it would seem, an object of inference? This last problem is involved in Berkeley's constant assumption of other selves and of God, whose existence we can of course not immediately experience, but a knowledge of whom is implicitly assumed as possible. On the other hand, when it comes to the external world, Berkeley denies this transubjective reference; he refuses to accept the common belief that sensations, or at least some of them, are copies of a reality beyond, and holds that all we can know is the sensation itself, which has no power of standing for anything else. The second problem of epistemology is thus answered, so far as the external world is concerned, by denying the fact which had to be explained, while as regards other selves and

God, the fact is assumed without any very adequate explanation.

Now it is the first of these two problems which has, in the history of philosophy, been most systematically and consciously argued about, and the second has for the most part been somewhat confusedly mixed up with it. We may then consider, in the present chapter, the source of knowledge and nature of the knowing process, as it has been formulated in the two opposing schools of sensationalists and rationalists. And in order to make the difference between them clearer, it may be well to say a few words about the historical origin of the antithesis. From the very beginning of philosophical thinking, there has been a recognition of the fact that the results of reflective thought cannot be made to correspond completely with the immediate impressions of ordinary sense experience, but the nature and ground of the difference was still left vague and

undetermined. The first step towards a scientific analysis was taken by Socrates. Socrates was interested, for practical reasons, in finding some permanent and universal standard which could be applied to human action. Since, then, on the surface men's ideas and opinions are varied and contradictory, he was led to look back of these manifold differences and inconsistencies, and to find the truth in that residuum in which, after their differences have been eliminated, men ultimately agree. If, for instance, we want to know what a chair or a table really is, we must disregard all unessential peculiarities of color or shape, and get back to that in which all men's ideas correspond, and without which it would cease to be a chair or table. In other words, Socrates started out to hunt for what we call the concept, the abstract or general idea, as that about which scientific thought, as opposed to sense perception, was to busy itself. Now Plato,

who was much more interested in mere abstract thinking for its own sake than was Socrates, developed this conception in a way which was of the utmost importance. Here, on the one side, was the object of sense, the particular table which we see, and on the other hand the concept table, which did not exist in the realm of sense experience, but only in the realm of thought. Since, however, Plato had no doubt that thought, and indeed thought alone, enables us to get hold of the only kind of reality which is really worth knowing, what sort of reality is it to which the concept corresponds? Plato answered this in the most natural way at the time, by assuming, alongside the world of sense, another world, the world of ideas or concepts; and just as sense experience tells us of the real existence of the particular table, so thought tells us of the existence of the concept table, only in a supersensible, not a sensible, world. Indeed, the process of knowing

these concepts was also conceived quite after the analogy of sensible perception; only, as in our present life thinking seems to be a direct and spontaneous act, the occasion of beholding these divine archetypes in the world of ideas was assigned to a previous existence, and thought was regarded as a recollection of the impressions which at that time had been imprinted on the soul. We have, therefore, a distinct dualism, a world of real (sensible) things, and a higher realm of ideas, which are the ultimate form of reality, and in which sensible things somehow participate, after a fashion which Plato never succeeded in making clear; and, corresponding to this, we have two separate faculties in man, sense and thought, busied respectively about these two different classes of objects.

The assumption that the idea or concept has an actual existence by itself was sure, sooner or later, to come into question, and during the Middle Ages it was the centre

of a fierce conflict between the so-called Realists, and their opponents the Nominalists. These latter maintained, in general, that concepts are only products of human thought, and that real existences are always concrete and individual. For a long time the conflict was essentially one between theological conservatism and progress, and the issue was to decide whether thought should be restricted to a world outside the finite world, one that was abstract, and fixed by dogma and tradition (for a purely logical process requires its starting-point to be taken as established and self-evident, and a self-evident truth is very apt to be merely a tradition, something we have grown so used to that it does not occur to us to examine it); or whether men should be allowed to find reality in actual life, to interrogate it, and learn from it immediately and for themselves: and in so far as it stood for this, the victory lay finally with nominalism. Accordingly, there was

witnessed a displacement of intellectualism by empiricism. Instead of deducing truth demonstratively from self-evident premises, by the mere process of logic, a process whose barrenness had become more and more apparent, men were told to open their eyes and look about them. That was truth which actually approved itself to the senses, and the only way to get hold of truth was empirically, by letting it come in immediate contact with the eye, and hand, and ear. The "ideas" with which men had been busy before were not derived, as they had thought, from a special source: they were only an abstraction of the common elements of those individual things which we get at originally in sense experience.

Since the close of the Middle Ages, however, there can hardly be said to have been, at least in the intention of its upholders, any actual hostility to scientific inquiry as such on the part of rationalistic philosophy. There has been a gen-

eral disposition to agree, on both sides, that, within a certain sphere, the scientific observation and colligation of particular facts is a necessary and justifiable proceeding, and makes possible a knowledge of the world which we cannot get from any process of logic. No one, again, would seriously hold at the present day that there is an actual supersensible world made up of concepts, or abstract ideas; there is a pretty wide agreement that the commoner concepts are arrived at as nominalism maintained, by abstracting those elements which are common to all members of a class; and that therefore they exist as a mental product, not in nature. On the other hand, nominalism soon found that a world of mere isolated particulars, waiting to be picked up one by one through observation, was not a sufficient basis for fruitfulness in the scientific inquiry which it had so much at heart. For a practical working method, science did not find it enough merely to

chronicle sense impressions: it required some intellectual tool which would enable it also to deduce, necessarily and exactly, events which were not actually present to the senses. This tool it found in mathematics. Mathematics, then, supplies again the rational and logical element which sensationalism was inclined to minimize, and the old problem, though in a changed form, of course, thus passes over into modern thought. We no longer think that the abstract table exists *in rerum natura*, but we talk about the law of gravitation as really existing and acting, in much the same way that the old realists talked of the ideas of good and of justice. Our scientific world is almost wholly expressed in terms of law, and the relation of law to the facts of sense is, therefore, still a real problem.

In view of all this it is not an easy thing to formulate any single statement which shall adequately express the relation of rationalism to sensationalism in

modern thought, but in a rough way it may perhaps be summed up as follows. The existence of a rational element, *i.e.*, of certain principles of order and connection, through which alone we can get any grip upon particular facts of sense experience, and arrange them into an objective world, amenable to scientific treatment, is admitted by all; the question turns upon the source through which these principles are obtained. To use a well-known phrase, it is a question of the existence of innate ideas. Sensationalism holds that we have various particular sense experiences, and that these form our entire data; by noticing the nature and arrangement of these we may formulate certain principles, which we may infer to be applicable to other experiences as well; but this is an inference, and nothing more, and all that we can say of a certainty is that they are true of the actually experienced facts from which they were drawn. Rationalism maintains, on the

contrary, that sense experience sets the mind to working on its own account, and causes it to deliver itself of truths which are not contained in any of our actual experiences, or in all of them together, but which extend over a wider ground than experience can possibly cover. These truths, to be sure, no longer are regarded as constituting an abstract world of reality by themselves in Plato's sense, but they are supposed to tell us something *about* reality, with a certainty which the senses never can give. We feel sure that they are true, not because we can trace and verify them in experience, but because, along with the recognition of them, goes a certain inner light, a feeling of certitude and self-evidence which compels belief. These truths, moreover, are not concerned with mere empirical and finite facts, such as get to us through perception, but with the fundamental realities of the universe; and by properly combining them and arguing from them,

we may hope to attain to ultimate and metaphysical reality. The ideal, of course, would be to get a single truth from which everything could be deduced; but failing this, we may be satisfied to sift out the various isolated truths of which reason delivers herself, and to arrange these in such connection as they will allow.

The real nature of this ideal of logical demonstration, upon which rationalism is based, can be more conveniently spoken of in a subsequent chapter; for the present one or two less fundamental points may be noticed briefly. Just the history of the process through which the belief in a special intellectual faculty has arisen might itself make us hesitate about accepting it, but on this it is not necessary to insist. The essential fact for which rationalism stands, as against sensationalism, is the existence of something more in the world of experience than a mere succession of sense data, —the existence, that is, of principles, of

laws, to which the sensuous experience conforms, and which are more vitally related to it than would be the case were we to take them as simply secondary derivations, or abstractions, from an original reality which is adequately represented as a lot of isolated sensations. But now even if the justice of this be admitted, — and it will be seen presently that sensationalism finds a difficulty here, — yet the way in which the rationalist goes to work prevents him from offering a solution which is convincing. For in so far as he isolates the intellectual principles from the sensuous data, and gives them, as abstract thought, a separate origin, he is making it hard work to conceive of them as the laws *of* these data. The result is that the rationalist is always puzzled to fit sensations into his scheme, and if he does not try to get rid of them altogether, by making them either an illusion, or else a form of abstract thought in dis-

guise, which has somehow become confused and blurred, — and neither of these devices can be made to convey a clear and definite idea, — he has to end up with a dualism between sense and thought which leaves the connection very much in the dark. The sensuous material he is obliged in some sense to admit; but if he assigns the intellectual principles to another source, and makes them deal with what is, in some degree, a different field of interests, then sense experience is just what the sensationalist claims it is, mere isolated sensations, and the principles, imported from without, apply to it only in an external way. But now every one has to admit that when it comes to the actual facts of the world as they are known to science, we are dependent on observation and experience, and that self-evident truths of the intellect, no matter how valuable they may be in other spheres, go here a very short way indeed. The consequence is

that the rationalist practically grants that, for the great mass of experience, the sensationalist's explanation is correct, and he is able to reserve for himself only a little group of very abstract principles. It has already been remarked that, so far as the commoner concepts go, no stress is any longer laid upon them, and it is generally allowed that they may be derived from experience by abstraction. So also no one would think of establishing a scientific law without directly interrogating nature. The sensationalist, however, will of course not rest satisfied with this. If we admit that thought abstractions, up to a certain point, are derived in an intelligible way from sense experience, then we ought not to stop here arbitrarily, but clearly should go on and see if the same explanation will not apply to the remainder also. Accordingly sensationalism has tended more and more to encroach on the field which the rationalist has marked off as sacred, and has tried

consistently to show how its explanation will apply, not in some cases only, but in all.

And whatever opinion may be held about his success in this, the sensationalist has at any rate the distinct logical advantage which the possessor of a single principle always has over an opponent who is obliged to have recourse to two. The consequence has been, as was said before, that empiricism has practically been successful in claiming for itself all the wealth of actual concrete experience which makes up our everyday world, while rationalism has had to content itself with a constantly restricted realm of very abstract truth, which in comparison with the other may easily be made to appear as hardly worth the pains. And even if we think that the interests which it involves are, on the contrary, not trivial, but vastly important, it still has to pay the penalty of its abstractness. For no amount of conviction as to the absolute correctness of the logical pro-

cess of demonstration, can ever be quite a satisfactory basis for a belief in the existence of God, or in those other facts which philosophical as well as religious interests demand. The whole thing is too far from our practical concrete life and feelings; it seems to lack the substantialness which belongs to the proof we demand in other spheres; and while we may not be able to disprove, or even, perhaps, to doubt, those axiomatic truths on which the whole argument depends, yet the necessity of basing everything on the evidence of a few abstract statements which stand by themselves, isolated from the concrete unity and body of experience, whose total testimony we are accustomed to call for if we are to have vital and profound conviction, makes it difficult for us to rest with certainty, and to rid ourselves of a lingering doubt whether, after all, these truths which we have been compelled to take simply on their own authority may not be deceiving us.

With this brief statement of the insufficiency of ordinary rationalism, we may pass to the consideration of its rival in the field. The philosopher who has carried out sensationalism most logically and completely is David Hume, and as he has a particularly close connection with both the preceding and the subsequent course of philosophical development, his work will furnish the most convenient point of approach. It has been seen how Berkeley gave up the ontological substance which had been supposed to lie back of a group of qualities, and so had resolved matter into mere states of consciousness, into sensations. But Berkeley had never doubted that there was a substratum, the mind or self, in which these states of consciousness inhere. Hume now carried the analysis a step further. The same reasons, he said, which prevent us from believing in an unknown substance matter, tell equally against an unknown sub-

stance mind. If we hold strictly to the unadorned facts of experience, then we shall have to confess that the only thing we can rest on, and find solid under our feet, is an ever-changing flow of particular states of consciousness following each other in time. If I examine impartially what I call myself, I find nothing but these particular conscious facts; there may be certain sensations which, from their constancy, or for other reasons, are particularly associated with the idea of the self, but these are no abstract unity, but only sensations among others, with their own special place in the stream. That there is a sensation of red, of pressure, of a sweet taste, of these things we can be sure; that there is an apple that is red and sweet, or that there is an I who sees and tastes, is but an inference, for which philosophy furnishes no real justification.

But now if all that experience contains, and all that by the conditions of know-

ledge we can ever be assured of, is a string of sensations, how are we to account for those necessary truths on which the rationalist relies? It was Hume's criticism of these, and especially of the idea of causation, which formed his most noteworthy contribution to philosophical development. The rationalist had assumed that there is a necessary connection between events, expressed in the law that every effect must have a cause, and that this is made known by an ultimate deliverance of the mind. But what, said Hume, do we actually find when we look at the matter without prejudice? two events following each other in time, — this, and nothing more. For let any one attempt to describe what he thinks this necessary connection is; he will find that he cannot frame the slightest notion of it. We are accustomed to speak of the connecting link as a "force," but the concept of force as an immaterial something, leaping over from

one thing to another, is utterly unthinkable; if, on the other hand, force is conceived of definitely, and so is represented by a sensational element, then we have only another sensation, which cannot bind anything together. There are the two events, represented by sensations, one occurring after the other; but more than that does not exist. It is evident that on the principles of sensationalism this is the only possible result. How, if I depend simply on experience, can I say "must"? I can tell what always has been, but there my knowledge ends; I cannot say that the same thing will happen in the future, or, indeed, anything more than that it chanced to be so in the past.

How, then, does it happen that men so universally have got the notion that such a necessary connection exists? this, Hume thinks, does fall within the power of experience to explain. Let a thing happen in a certain way once, and we

may think nothing of it, but let it happen in the same way twenty or a hundred times, and it is inevitable that we should look to see the same order repeated when the thing occurs again. There is absolutely no proof that this will be the case, but we naturally expect it will; and this natural expectation, aroused by repetition, is the sole basis of the idea of causation. This explanation applied to causation is only a type of similar explanations by means of which the sensationalist school has attempted to account for all those ideas whose persistence has seemed to the rationalist to call for a special power of mind. Sensations following one another in time, and getting, by continued repetition, into certain durable associations — these are the only postulates the sensationalist thinks he stands in need of in order to explain the world.

Evidently, in thoroughgoing sensationalism, it is not an easy task to find any place for that which is commonly sup-

posed to be the chief end of knowledge, the getting us into contact with a reality existing beyond the mere sensational experience itself; and this suggests the most obvious objection to the theory. If it is true that we have an immediate knowledge of a string of sensations, and of nothing besides, the logical result is that, so far as we are concerned, the particular sensations which we experience make up the sum total of the universe. From this result, which is technically known as solipsism, Berkeley thought he was able to escape, though he does not make the process altogether clear. But so long as we do not deny outright the existence of self-evident truths, these may be supposed to be available to carry us beyond the limited set of sensations which we experience, on the ground, which, indeed, appears self-evident, that these are not self-explanatory, and so need some ulterior cause. But by denying the existence of such truths, sensa-

tionalism of course deprives itself of this expedient. Taking it on its own showing, there seems to be no possible way of making it even probable that anything exists beyond the particular sensations as they come and go, either in the nature of a material reality, or of other selves. If we appeal to that feeling, which undoubtedly we have, that a few bare sensations are not a sufficient ground for existence, and that the continued appearance of new sensations, and their orderly arrangement, must point to a more fundamental reality out of which they spring, since they cannot arise out of nothing, we are simply calling to our aid, in a slightly disguised form, that same principle of causation; and we have only to recollect that causation is a mere subjective expectation which a certain repetition of events has given rise to, and that not only does it tell us of no fact of reality, but there is no conceivable fact, in the nature of a connec-

tion between events, of which it could tell us, to see how slender a reed it is likely to prove. By no conceivability can the bare existence of a certain number of facts give us ground for believing that anything beyond these facts exists. It is clear, however, that this result is something which practically it is impossible to adopt. Hume saw this as clearly as any one, and he admits that just as soon as we stop philosophizing, we are compelled to take back at once all those beliefs which we had set aside, or else we should cease to live altogether. A belief in other people, at any rate, is an absolute condition of our action. But surely a theory which not only fails to account for the things which it is practically impossible for us to doubt, but whose tendency is directly to deny them, will not long allow itself to be accepted as a final statement of truth.

But the same argument will carry us even further. On what basis, if sensa-

tionalism is true, are we to believe in those past sensations even, which are essential to the existence of the theory? Each sensation stands for itself; it is real so long as it exists, and that is all we can say of it. But then we should be confined just to the particular sensation we are now experiencing, and should be entirely oblivious to any that had gone before. For one sensation to take us out of itself, and tell us about others, is a function which lies quite beyond the power of sensationalism to explain. On a sensationalistic basis we might be immediately conscious of one sensation at a time, but when it gave place to another it would vanish completely. But in that case, while sensationalism might be true, it is evident we should have no theory about it, for to construct the theory we have to get behind the sensation of the moment, and grasp, through memory, the series as a whole.

Those relating forms of thought, there-

fore, which Hume professed to derive in a secondary way from a purely sensational experience, and which, consequently, in opposition to the rationalist, he decided were only a fiction of the mind, and had no valid application to the actual world, he could in reality so derive only because he had smuggled them into his original data. Hume pretends that he is talking only of isolated sensations, feelings; he really is unable to say a word unless he substitutes, for mere feeling, a content which already is related in various ways; and relations are the work of thought. In order to talk even about feelings intelligently, he has to presuppose the world of permanent and related objects, to which we refer feelings as their source. Hume could not have made his view so much as plausible, if it had not been for his ability to substitute quietly the *perception of an object* for the feeling of a sensation, whenever it suited his convenience, and so for the tacit presence all along in his argument of those

ideas which he supposes that he is discarding, and which the ambiguity of language enables him to disguise.

Such in brief is the essential flaw in the sensationalist's position, and other criticisms would be only an enlargement on this; it may be well, however, to consider them a little more in detail, especially as they bear upon the relation to psychology and to science. Of course sensationalism is first of all a psychological theory, and it is in this sphere that its chief triumphs have been won. And on the whole its influence has been distinctly beneficial, for it has stood for an immediate appeal to experience, rather than for a reliance upon hypothetical faculties of the mind. But it has been able to set up for a complete psychological theory only by ignoring the fact, which is involved in the criticism above, that the existence of what, for an onlooker, would be a number of sensations in a series, does not at all account for the consciousness of these *as* a series; a suc-

cession of states of consciousness is a very different thing from the consciousness of succession, and there is no way of getting from the one to the other. The consciousness of succession is a fact for which sensationalism has no place; sensationalism could only admit it as an added fact *in* the series, another sensational element, and that would be of no use whatever for the purpose in view, which is to get the whole series into a unity. There is, then, something more to the conscious life than the sensationalist takes account of; it has an intelligible and purposive unity, which no description of it as a group of sensations adequately represents. Indeed, when we think of the ordered harmony of the world, and the complex interplay of our own rational lives, the reduction of this all to a mosaic made up of bits of sensation seems almost ludicrously untrue, if it is meant really to stand for a complete psychology. Accordingly there comes about a change of

attitude which is quite analogous to that which has already been described in speaking of the conception of material interaction. Since it is impossible to get an organic whole which will really explain the facts of the conscious life, by taking the separate sensations as our ultimate data, and simply adding these on one to another, it is natural to ask what can be accomplished by beginning at the other end, and making our starting-point the unity of the conscious life, out of which the various sensations are differentiated. And this is the standpoint which modern psychology tends to adopt. It may still be that, *from a certain point of view*, there is no element in the conscious life which cannot be given an expression in terms of sensation, but this will not mean that such a point of view is necessarily a final one, or that separate sensations come first, and then out of their combination the more complex products are built up. On the contrary, no sensation can be dis-

tinguished except as an element *in* the whole; the unity comes first, and the sensation stands out from this for some special reason, which depends, not on the sensation itself, but on the unitary life of which it forms a part. Sensations, therefore, as such, never at any one time make up the whole of the conscious life, and if they did they could not be recognized as sensations; there is always the unitary background which, because it is unitary, cannot be composed of a mechanical aggregate of parts, but must be assumed as a postulate before it can be known that there are any parts. Out of this the sensation is differentiated, and without it it could neither be recognized, compared with other sensations, nor put to any use in the economy of the organic experience. It is the recognition of this which makes Hume's argument against the self so futile, in so far as its effect on the average mind is concerned.

The relation of sensationalism to scien-

tific inquiry has already been noticed, and there will be no need to do more than repeat briefly what has been suggested before. Here again the connection of the theory with science is, historically, a very close one, for sensationalism started out as a demand that everything should be brought back to sensuous experience, as opposed to an *a priori* deduction from purely abstract grounds taken on authority. Nevertheless, at the present stage of development which science has reached, sensationalism clearly fails to supply it with any adequate theoretical basis. This failure may be put in two ways. In the first place, while sensation may be the point from which we start in building up a scientific world, yet that world is absolutely different from its sensational basis. It is permanent, whereas sensations are transitory; it is rigidly conformed to law, and presents an order altogether different from that apparently haphazard order in which sensations follow one another. Sen-

sationalism, in other words, fails to provide any way of getting beyond that succession of particular sensations which comes to us empirically in actual experience, while science demands that the world with which it deals should represent a reality altogether distinct from this experience. It very evidently is supposed to exist beyond all *actual* sensations, but the point may be obscured a little by reducing it to actual *or possible* sensations, as if in this way we were going to avoid the necessity of getting beyond sensations after all. But these possible sensations must have some sort of an existence, must be something more than mere figments of the imagination, if they are to serve any purposes of explanation; and since vastly the greater number of them never exist as actual sensations at all in any human experience, they must be supposed to stand for something beyond this experience; and such a reality, to repeat, sensationalism has no way of attaining.

The other thing which science demands, and which sensationalism is wholly unable to supply, is the element of necessity. The scientist works constantly on the assumption that his results are strictly necessary; he, of all men, is least able to tolerate the notion that there should be anything of chance, of contingency, in the world; he demands that law should rule everywhere and always. But we have seen that Hume made it once for all impossible to justify this; if Hume's contention is true, we can perhaps state that which has been in the past, but as to anything that has not actually entered into our experience we cannot even establish a presumption. For with the data which he gives us, even that expectation which grows up with repetition must be recognized as a subjective feeling only, of absolutely no account as proof. For the fact that a thing happens a thousand times, does not give rise to the slightest probability it will happen so again, *unless*

we assume the very point at issue to start with. How can we assert that, by increasing the number of particular instances from which our conclusion is drawn, the probability of its validity becomes greater? Only on the ground that, by increasing the number of cases, we can feel more certain that what we have observed is not due to mere chance or accident. But this distinction between two alternatives, causation, or chance, has no meaning unless we assume a universe governed by causation, and the existence of such a universe is the very thing we want to demonstrate. Granting the distinction, it may furnish a practical criterion for other inferences, but it never can establish the inference which is involved in the law of causation itself; for it is clearly impossible to prove anything by a process which already involves the validity of the thing we want to prove.

KANT

KANT

IN the attempt to discover the true nature of reality, we found it was impossible to proceed far without examining more closely the act of knowledge itself. Setting aside that element of the problem which concerns itself with the inquiry as to how a fact of experience can refer to something beyond itself, in the last chapter we had to consider the nature of the knowing process as a part of experience, and the two types of theory which make it to consist in sensation and in thought respectively. It appeared that neither of these attempts to explain knowledge was fully successful. Apparently both

sensation and thought alike are required in any act of knowing; sensation to furnish the material, and thought to prevent this from being chaotic merely, and to subject it to law. This element of law is recognized by the rationalist, but recognized in an inadequate way; by separating the principles of thought so sharply from experience, he cannot, on the one hand, explain their relation to sense experience, which as such remains open to the same objections which the sensationalist has to meet; and then, too, he has to encounter all the difficulties attaching to the notion of a knowledge whose source lies altogether outside the realm of experience, difficulties which modern empiricism has made sufficiently prominent. Sensationalism, on the other hand, recognizes clearly that such a transcendental knowledge, regarded as separate from experience, is out of the question; its failure consists in putting a too restricted content into its conception of

what experience is. In the criticism of sensationalism which has just been given, there are, as it may have been noticed, two somewhat distinct lines of objection. Sensationalism may be attacked, in the first place, because it supplies no means of getting outside the individual experience, to the world of objects which science regards as distinct from this. But we also may object to it, as giving only a partial account of what the individual experience itself is like. Mere isolated sensations form, as we have seen, no experience at all; thought relations are necessary in order to bind this material together. Naturally, then, we might expect to find the next step in the direction of some theory which should recognize the importance of both factors alike, while adjusting them within a larger whole; which should correct sensationalism by allowing the necessity of thought relations, but which should regard such relations, not as something separate and

transcendental, but as an essential constituent of experience itself: and it is a development in this direction which was begun by Kant.

The name of Immanuel Kant must be regarded as one of the two or three greatest names in the history of philosophy. The particular results which he reached may not be acceptable to us now, and we may think that his mode of reaching and of stating them was cumbersome, technical, and a trifle pedantic; but the fact remains that the new insight which he gained, and the new point of view from which he approached philosophical problems, have dominated the whole succeeding course of thought, and have proved the starting-point for the most fruitful philosophic development since the time of Plato and Aristotle. We must try to discover what, stripped of its technicalities, the real meaning of Kant's thought was.

The starting-point of Kant's philoso-

phy, and the problem which he had to solve, was, as has been said, this same problem which we have been considering as the conflict between sensationalism and rationalism. Kant started out himself as a rationalist of the most rigorous type, a rationalist of the school of Wolff. Wolff was one of those fortunate philosophers who have been persuaded that, out of the most abstract propositions of logical thought, they have been able to deduce a perfect system of truth, which demonstrates all those realities which men have been accustomed to strive after in philosophy, — God, freedom, immortality, and the whole scheme and framework of the universe. This was on the assumption, which for some time had been common among philosophers, that the ideal of a philosophical method was mathematics or geometry. Mathematics, as we have seen, had been used practically in science, and had achieved startling results; and it was natural that it should

thereupon be transferred to philosophy as well. Now what struck men first in the method of geometry was that, starting from certain admitted premises, you could deduce, and be demonstratively sure of your deduction of, a great number of new mathematical relations. It was exactly the same thing that Wolff, and after him Kant, tried to do in the realm of ontological and cosmological truths.

Kant came to a recognition of the fruitlessness of all these endeavors, by convincing himself of the fact, which had escaped the notice of his predecessors, that, in reality, there is an essential difference in the way in which men had gone to work in metaphysics, and in geometry. For geometry, as opposed to metaphysics, was constantly falling back on at least the spatial form of sensuous experience. The geometrician, that is, gets his results by constantly envisaging space relations, and by drawing lines, actually or ideally, to show him what

these relations are; he does not deduce his conclusions from his axioms and propositions barely as intellectual truths. But in metaphysics no such appeal is made. As soon as we are in possession of this distinction, we are able to recognize, what indeed is noticeable enough, that the solidity of achievement, and continuousness of development, which we see in mathematics, seem in philosophy almost wholly wanting. We may infer, therefore, that it is just this relation which it bears to the spatial form of sense experience that gives mathematics its advantage over metaphysics, and enables it, instead of stopping with merely analytic propositions, to be all the time advancing to something new; and that, consequently, mathematics furnishes no analogy by which a purely rational treatment of philosophy can be justified. On the contrary, this recognition of the difference involved is fatal to the claim which rationalism makes.

Confronted by this outcome, Kant next turned, as other philosophers had done, to empiricism, in order to find the origin of those necessary truths from which he hoped to satisfy his longing for a knowledge of the eternal interests of man. But here again he was met by Hume, who proved to him that it is just such necessary and universal truths, as, *e.g.*, the universality of causation, which experience is entirely unable to explain. Now Hume had stopped here, and left the matter so; Kant went beyond him by noticing, what already has been mentioned as a difficulty in the way of sensationalism, that on such an outcome no ground is left for scientific certainty. If, Kant said, Hume's sensationalism is the end of the matter, then it is utterly out of the question for us to say that anything *must* be so; we can say that it always has been so in the past, but there the thing must drop. But now as a matter of fact we have two sciences,

mathematics and physics, in which such necessary *a priori* judgments are constantly made. To give up the splendid results of science is impossible; if, then, we cannot be content to accept a theory which takes away their foundations, we must search further, and ask ourselves what conditions are required to serve as a secure basis for these results which every one admits. How, in other words, is it possible to pass a judgment which does not simply state the results of what we have learned in the past, but which adds to our knowledge, and which yet, in spite of the fact that it goes beyond what we have already experienced, can be said to be, not probably, but necessarily and universally true? Such was the question which Kant put to himself.

The answer which he gives is sufficiently long and detailed, and in very large part can be left to the advanced student of philosophy; it is the essential attitude which Kant adopts in which we

are interested here. It has already been noticed that the problem of knowledge involves two pretty distinct questions, — the possibility of a reference in knowledge to reality lying beyond the experience of the one who knows, and existing on its own account, and, on the other hand, the nature of knowing as an experience, and the peculiar part played within this by the sensuous data and the governing principles of thought, respectively. It is one of Kant's merits that he began the process of disentangling these two problems, and so rendered possible a fruitful treatment of each of them, though it was the latter one to which he himself gave the most of his attention. This, therefore, is what we shall consider first.

We must remember what the ordinary treatment of the part played by thought in knowledge has for the most part been. Thought and sense have been looked upon, in the more or less com-

mon-sense way of viewing the matter, as two separate sources of authority, each valid in its own sphere, which is more or less distinct from that of the other, and each referring to facts of reality already existing by themselves in something the same form in which they are known. The difference is that the facts revealed by sense are contingent and empirical merely, while those revealed by thought are necessary, and, metaphysically, of much greater importance, as giving us an account of reality in its essential structure. Now Kant undertook to show that thought, in this meaning of the term in which, as abstract, it stands opposed to sense data, does not by itself tell us about reality at all; that the only valuable question is, What part does thought play within experience? not, What reference does it bear to truth lying beyond? for there is no sphere of truth beyond experience to which it corresponds. Or, to put it

as an answer to the question about the possibility of necessary judgments, Kant found the necessity he was in search of, not as something in nature, which is then reproduced and known in our experience, but as something in experience which itself constitutes what we know as nature. He reached this conclusion in the following way. Suppose we take a geometrical truth; how now can we say, absolutely and without exception, that the sum of the angles of any triangle will equal two right angles? Not from experience; that would tell us that the proposition was true of all the triangles we had examined in the past, but not that it would prove to be true of the next one we might happen to meet. If it be as true as you please about triangles in their own proper existence, yet triangles can only come into our experience one by one, and by this process we could only tell the facts about the particular triangles we had

run across up to date, not about the rest which as yet had not come into contact with us. The necessity, that is, in so far as *we* can talk of necessity, cannot lie in reality as it exists in itself apart from our experience, for since we cannot grasp the whole of infinite reality at once, and since it is the conviction of a necessary connection *in our experience* that is to be justified, the coming of reality piecemeal into experience gives us no ground for asserting anything whatever of that which still is left outside. What follows then? Simply this, that if we grant the validity of necessary judgments at all, it must be founded on the nature of our experience, not on the nature of the reality that is known. If, that is, our experience is of such a nature that nothing can enter into it without taking on a particular form, then we can say, with certainty, that everything, in the future as well as in the past, must have just

this form and no other; we can pass, in other words, a necessary, synthetic judgment *a priori*, and on no other condition can we do so. This necessary form which outer sense material must take, and which renders mathematics possible, is space, while time, again, is the form of the inner sense. No matter what may be true of reality beyond experience, we can be perfectly sure that, *for us*, all experience will correspond to geometrical truths, because, unless it succeeds in taking on the spatial form on which geometry is based, it will not form part of our experience at all, but will forever remain shut out from our knowledge.

In precisely the same way we are to account for those other necessary judgments, the intellectual ones. How can we be sure, *e.g.*, that every effect must have a cause, or that there must always be a substance underlying qualities? simply because our intellectual machin-

ery is so constituted that it will take no grist which does not adapt itself to these particular forms of substance and causality. A necessary judgment is possible, for the reason that we are not judging about things in themselves, but about the necessary connection of elements in our own experience; and we could have nothing that it would be possible to call experience, if it were not for certain necessary forms of relationship between the elements which make it up. In other words, if I am to be an intelligent being, and have an experience which also is intelligible, this experience must be to a certain degree coherent. If it is to be *my* experience, it must be a unity; I must somehow be present through it all, binding its parts together into a whole. It cannot be a simple string of feelings succeeding one another in time, for, as we saw in criticising sensationalism, such a series would have no knowledge of itself as a unity:

it is the "I" which binds these feelings together by threads of intellectual relationships, which are not themselves a part of the series at all. This coherency in my life implies not merely that groups of fleeting sensations should exist, but it also necessitates that I should be able to recognize these, and so that they should stand for objects that are identical and permanent; and a permanent object already involves the category of substantiality. Permanence requires that we should have a consciousness of succession, and we have seen that this is something that a mere succession of states of consciousness can never give, and that it needs some sort of conscious unity to bind the states of consciousness together, a unity which is not itself a member of the temporal series. Then, too, the different objects, if they are to form part of a single experience, must be reciprocally connected with one another, members of a common

world; and, again, the past and future must have some intelligible and necessary relation, since they also are parts of a single experience, in every point of which I find myself equally present; and so we need the categories of reciprocity and causality, as tools which the self necessarily requires to help it unify its life. Beyond our experience these categories may not apply; but since it is only such elements of reality as will fit the mould in which our intellectual nature is cast, that in any wise concern us, we can take the laws as absolute. It is not, then, nature which imposes its necessity upon us, but it is we who give laws to nature. The truths of the rationalist are not revelations of existence beyond; they show instead our own intellectual make-up. They are the *forms* of experience, as over against its content.

For Kant, consequently, thought is no longer, as with the rationalist, something

that occupies a special field of its own alongside sensational experience; there is no such thing as a purely sensational experience, which thought relations do not already help to constitute. The sensationalist had tried to make out that bare sensations come first, and that thought is afterwards imposed as a superstructure upon them. Kant met this by showing that any statement we can make, even the very arguments by which such a result is reached, already presuppose what they want to prove. There is absolutely no piece of experience which goes beyond a mere momentary and inarticulate feeling, and so no experience at all that philosophy can take account of, which does not already show thought relations bound up in it. An original state of pure subjectivity is a fiction; from the very start experience is objective, the experience of a cosmos. And an inquiry into the nature of the most essential of these thought relations which are found in all

experience, constitutes a chief part of Kant's work.

With this somewhat brief and summary statement of Kant's doctrine, we may pass on to an important consequence of it which still remains to be mentioned. It is quite essential, if we are to understand Kant, to grasp clearly at the start a distinction between two possible ways in which such terms as "nature" and the "objective world" may be used. When Kant says that we ourselves constitute nature, he does not mean, as at first we might naturally be inclined to suppose, that the great fabric of reality which, in our ordinary way of viewing the world, we think of as existing eternally, and as forming the ground out of which we, as transient beings, have sprung, first gains the right to be by coming under subjection to certain rules which our mind imposes; that we create all that is, as the subjective idealist might maintain. This is one sense of the term

"objective world,"—that eternal and fundamental background which we are ready to believe exists alongside and beyond our transient human experience. But we may take another point of view from this. Suppose I look back on any section of my experience, that, *e.g.*, through which yesterday I passed. Now within this experience, as an experience, there is represented, quite distinct from the "me" which is only one special element of it, the world in which I live and move, and the other men and women with whom I come in contact. I walk down a street, I enter a house, I sit down to dinner, I converse with this man or that. It is true that afterwards I think of it all as my experience, and I suppose that the reality of the house and table and men was not exhausted in their existence as a part of this experience, but that they also were in possession of an existence of their own; but even as my experience it was not a chaos of subjective sensa-

tions, but an objectively ordered whole, of which other men and things constitute just as real a part as I myself do. Now it is nature in this sense of which Kant speaks when he says that we constitute the world; it is the world as it has an existence within human experience, the house as it plays a part in my life, and then passes out again to give place to something else, not the house as it exists on its own account, independently of human activities.

It is to be noticed, therefore, that when Kant speaks of experience, and of the objective world as an element in experience, he always means the individual experience, and it never occurs to him to doubt that beyond this lies a more ultimate reality on which the individual experience is based. To be sure, this individual experience is not the mere empirical self that can be completely defined as a succession of states of consciousness in time, for we have seen that these

latter are only real as they are moulded into a coherent unity by the spontaneous and unconscious action of a higher Ego, which is present in all of them alike, and so is itself in some sense out of time; and the distinction between this "higher" Ego, and the empirical self, opened up a problem which, in the confusion which still existed in Kant's theory of knowledge, introduces a good deal of ambiguity at times into his statements, and paves the way for the later idealism of his followers. Still the concrete basis of all that Kant is talking about, as he for the most part recognizes himself, is that unity of experience which ordinarily is regarded as making up an individual life, taken, of course, not as a mere string of sensations, but as an intelligible unity, within which there is represented a world of things and other selves. But it also follows from Kant's doctrine that, as regards the nature of the ultimate reality which lies beyond experience,

we must forever remain, intellectually at least, in the profoundest ignorance. For everything that can enter into our experience is incurably affected by the nature of our own mind, which throws all its knowledge into the form of space and time; and these forms, as merely subjective, make it forever impossible that we should know how the real exists in its own proper nature, when subjective forms are laid aside. The claims of rationalism to grasp reality are defeated by the indissoluble connection of thought with the material of sense. Rationalism had supposed that thought is an independent faculty that can work by itself; Kant showed, on the contrary, that for any concrete act of knowledge, thought and sense are both alike required. Sense material alone is blind and unordered, it is not experience at all in an objective sense; thought by itself is empty, a mere form, which requires a content before the terms "true" and "false" can be applied

to it. This is the answer to the query why, even though it be true that, strictly, the nature of knowledge only enables us to speak of necessity in connection with our experience, there might not be a possibility, at least, that ultimate reality also corresponds to this same necessary law which our mental life reveals; a correspondence between reality and the thought laws is out of the question, because the thought forms by themselves are mere abstractions, only half of what is necessary for valid knowledge.

Let us consider, then, just what Kant has accomplished. First of all, he has shown that experience is far more than the sensationalist had suspected; instead of being a host of individual sensations, it is an intelligible unity, within which all the elements are related to each other so as to form an organic whole. And on this basis he is able to effect a certain reconciliation between sensationalist and rationalist. With the sensationalist, he

denies that it is possible to get beyond experience; but *within* experience we are not confined to a statement of what *has* been, but we are able to pass necessary judgments as to what the general nature of subsequent experience must be. In other words, while we cannot say that this particular event is necessarily connected with that particular event, we *can* say that nothing which does not enter into an intelligible relationship to the rest of experience can ever exist for us, since experience means nothing except as it forms an intelligible whole. We have, that is, in so far as reality is of the nature of experience, a rational basis for those necessary ties between events which science demands, although this does not determine what the connections are in particular. But at least there is the advantage that we have not rendered, as sensationalism does, the possibility of such necessary connections unintelligible. We cannot say that no event can take

place in the world of reality without a cause, but we can say that it is impossible for us to carry out the demand which is laid upon us as reasonable beings, and explain rationally any event, except as we bring it into that relation to the rest of the world which is represented by the category of causation. While, however, it is only with reference to our experience that this necessity holds, Kant did not give up the notion of a reality beyond experience. It will be seen that, in one respect at least, he has retained the old dualism of mind and matter; there is still the mind or self with its laws, and the outer world which in some way supplies this with the data of sense. And not only the outer world, but the self also, is in its real nature unknown; it is only as the two come together and produce the concrete facts of experience, that we get anything that is accessible to knowledge. We have, then, a limited field of concrete experience, bounded on

each side by unknown tracts; and it is according as one or the other of these aspects of Kant's thought is emphasized, that we get the two main streams of development that flow from him. By recognizing the existence of things-in-themselves, Kant opens up the problem of epistemology, in the form in which it deals with that which has been spoken of as the external reference in knowledge; and on this side of his thought he has given the impulse which has resulted in neo-Kantian agnosticism. But while he always stubbornly maintained that such an extra-experiential reality was an indubitable fact, yet the whole logic of his doctrine renders it impossible to hold to, and the practical result of his most characteristic labors was to transfer the problem from the consideration of such things-in-themselves, to an inquiry into the factors which enter into actual experience. Even here the dualism with which Kant started he never wholly overcomes; the

sense material and the governing laws of thought stand out as in some degree distinct, and as needing to be brought together by external means. Nevertheless, by bringing down the problem from the heavens to the earth, and by looking for its solution in the verifiable facts of experience, the possibility of a more organic treatment was now given. On this side Kant's thought has been the source of objective idealism, or Hegelianism. And it is this latter development, as the most direct and the most important outcome of Kant's influence, that will be examined in the following chapter.

HEGEL

HEGEL

THE connection between the two sides of Kant's doctrine, his analysis of the facts of experience, and his recognition of things-in-themselves, was not a logical one. Logically, as events show, he ought to have ceased to hold to the latter, and it was only his strong feeling for reality which prevented him from doing this. It was very quickly pointed out, however, that his position was inconsistent. The idea of cause, he had said, holds solely within experience; it tells us nothing whatever about things-in-themselves, and is empty and abstract so long as it is not supplied with the material of sense. But

why do we believe in things-in-themselves at all? Practically because the material of sense finds no explanation within experience, and requires to be furnished from without, or, in other words, to have an outside cause. This was the assumption of rationalism, that the possibility of this external reference in knowledge was to be explained, if at all, by having recourse to a deliverance of the rational nature; and although Kant's principles forbade him still to hold this explanation, yet as it never occurred to him to go behind it, and inquire whether there might not be some different way of reaching the same result, he had no other account of the process to suggest. And consequently, while he felt that he was in the right, and to the end refused to give up his belief, he really had no answer to make when it was pointed out by his critics that he was requiring us to hold that we are led to a supersensible reality through the category of cause, at the same

time that this category is declared to have no possible application to such a reality.

The main line of development from Kant was, therefore, consistent in dropping things-in-themselves quietly, and in confining itself, as Kant also had done in practice, to the reality of experience. It will not be necessary to trace the growth of idealism through Kant's various successors, but we may pass at once to the last and greatest of them, — to Hegel and Hegelianism.

There has been no more subtle and baffling thinker in all the history of thought than Hegel. Most of his critics, in the opinion of his followers at any rate, have wholly missed his point, and even among those who call themselves disciples there has been a disheartening difference of opinion as to what Hegel really meant. The difficulty has to some extent been due to the fact that Hegel has never taken the trouble to state, precisely and unambiguously, the peculiarity of his own

point of approach to philosophical problems, in its distinction from the common-sense standpoint, and that, consequently, when we interpret his words by the meaning they might naturally bear in ordinary speech, as many of his opponents have done, we are landed in confusion, and are able neither to do justice to his great merits, nor to put our finger definitely on his weaknesses. In what follows I shall have to be understood as giving my own interpretation of Hegel, which there will be no room, of course, to substantiate in detail; and I shall try to show that, on this view, Hegel is to be criticised on the ground, not so much that his results are untenable, as that, while they are valid from a certain standpoint, that standpoint itself is not the ultimate one, but requires to be reinterpreted in a larger setting. We thus come back again to the definition of metaphysics as a criticism of points of view.

It must be remembered that Hegel ac-

cepts unreservedly the position of Kant's successors, and drops all reference to things-in-themselves without further ceremony. It is self-evident to him that philosophy has to do with experience, and experience alone; and, indeed, it may be asked with a good deal of force, what possible concern we can have with anything that lies beyond experience. Hegel, however, does not agree with Kant in holding that this experience is the subjective experience of an individual; philosophy for him deals directly with the Absolute. But what, then, does Hegel mean by the Absolute? and what is the relation in which it stands to Kant's individual experience? It is just this which forms the crux of the whole Hegelian system, and which it is peculiarly difficult to grasp so long as we keep to the ordinary common-sense way of looking at the world. In trying to understand it, let us put ourselves as much as possible in Hegel's own position.

Kant, as we have seen, had made a revolution in the method of philosophy. Instead of regarding the world as an existing fact, which stood ready made, and only waiting to be recognized, he had declared that the world is *constructed by the self*, and so had put the self at the centre of the problems of philosophy. In doing this, he was simply giving philosophical expression to an intellectual movement which was far more widespread than technical philosophy, and which was represented in the growing recognition that the world of reality which men find, in the first place, round about and seemingly independent of them, crystallized in the form of political and social institutions, and even of scientific knowledge and of religious beliefs, is not a mere objective fact, which is forced upon men by external authority, and to which they have to fit themselves; but that it has all grown directly out of human needs and human activities, to which it must come back if it

is to find its explanation and its justification. The world of experience is the creation of man, and it is a creation which is an essential part of his nature, not something which he can take or leave as he pleases. It is not, however, created by man in any conscious or arbitrary way, as the statement might seem at first to imply. Civilization is no conscious product of individual self-seeking; it is something of which we can only say that it "just grew." This is recognized by Kant in his doctrine of the transcendental unity of apperception, that somewhat mysterious "higher self," which, by its use of the various categories, unconsciously creates for itself the objective world to which the empirical "me" belongs. While, however, Kant gave expression, in his philosophy, to this notion of the supremacy of the self, he did not succeed in working it out and stating it except in a very formal and inadequate manner. It is, indeed, only as they are bound together in this "unity of

apperception" that the categories can do their work; in other words, the action of the thought forms in creating an objective world is only possible, so long as this world forms part of a unitary conscious whole, an experience of which one part can be connected with another, for the reason that it all alike is mine. But the nature of this higher self remained obscure, and the various categories were left side by side, with no more vital relationship to one another than is implied in their all being alike connected with the Ego. Then, too, besides the categories there was the material of sense, and this, although it was necessary to the reality of experience, was regarded as coming from a wholly different source. How, now, could the world of experience, which the Ego creates, be given a concrete, not a purely formal, unity? how could the self be characterized, not as abstract and distinct from the world, but through and by means of its creation? — such, in a general

way, was Hegel's problem. Or, put less technically, What is the principle of unity in life? For with Hegel the purely abstract side, such as found expression in Kant's analysis of the thought categories, was not the ultimate problem, though it was an important part of it. Between Kant and Hegel had come, for one thing, the brilliant Romantic movement, by which the latter had been influenced; and it was in those concrete products of human activity to which the Romanticists had called attention, art, religion, and the other rich fruits of civilization and culture, that Hegel's final interest lay, much more obviously than Kant's had done. Once more, Hegel did not bother himself about reality that exists unknown and beyond experience; what he was interested in was life itself. And if, as Kant declared, the world is the creation of the self, reality will be just this process of continuous creation which life presents. The task of philosophy,

therefore, will be to find, as Kant himself had failed to do, some unitary principle which the process of reality reveals, and which will enable us to interpret it.

But is, then, this process one of merely individual, or even of human experience, in the ordinary sense? The answer was suggested by Kant's own doctrine of the transcendental self. Is not the world, and mankind, am not I myself, only real for this more inclusive unity which knows us all? There would be no knowledge of an individual as such, if he had not already come within a conscious unity transcending his mere individuality; and therefore this larger reality, of whose knowledge the individual forms only a part, cannot be itself an experience which is merely individual. If the real "I" were not larger than the empirical self, it never could know this latter as part of a more inclusive world. My self, my true and complete self, carries me, when I come to work out its implications, far beyond

the limits of anything I can call subjective; in the last resort, it has relations which are coextensive with the universe, all of which relations are essential to its being. Or it may perhaps be clearer if we substitute for the word "self" the concept of "experience," since, after all, it only is the unity of experience for which this notion of the "higher self" stands. Everything of which we can speak at all is, in some sense at least, an element within experience, and in this sense experience extends far beyond the mere subjective self. I am only a point in the midst of the vastly larger world of men and things which experience presents. And in this way Hegel can answer Kant's claim that experience is subjective: how can experience belong to a self which is itself an element within experience? The self enters as an element into experience only under certain peculiar conditions; if, *e.g.*, I am engaged in a very absorbing pursuit, there is no recognition of

myself, I lose myself, as we say; and consequently the self is less fundamental than the whole process out of which it arises. And this whole inclusive process of experience, within which all the special distinctions which we recognize by thought arise, is what Hegel means by the Absolute, or God.

With this general statement as to Hegel's standpoint, we need to consider a little more closely the relation which his treatment of the abstract thought categories bears to it. And in order to follow Hegel's thought, let us go back again to the results of Kant's inquiry. Up to Kant's time, metaphysicians had been in the habit of taking the general categories of abstract thinking, such as substance and causation, and without any special examination of them had applied them forthwith as an instrument for getting the particular bit of information about ultimate reality which each of them happened to afford. Kant had put phi-

losophy on another track. Instead, he said, of using your instrument at once, you should first examine it; you should turn your attention from ultimate existence to the relation which your thought bears to the rest of the experience with which it is connected. A start was thus made towards understanding the thought forms, not as isolated dicta, but as organically related to one another and to life. Kant, however, as we have said, had left the process of experience still more or less disjointed; not only were sense and thought referred to different principles, but the different thought forms themselves were only very loosely connected. What Hegel set out to do was to make the unity organic. Life is not made up of isolated acts of thought, each telling you about some particular item, but it is in a real sense a whole. You cannot, therefore, understand any of these thought abstractions which you are constantly using, — being, quality, substance

and attributes, force, and the like, — unless you examine its relationships, see what particular service it performs in the living whole of experience, and then interpret it with reference to that. In his Logic, then, Hegel tries to show that the different categories which we use in thinking are thus connected with each other in a vital way, from the most abstract of them, pure being, to that which is most adequate to the nature of reality; and that we cannot isolate any by itself, and take it out of its connection. Each thought form, when we examine it carefully, is found to imply all the others, and in the law of their development which he detects, in accordance with which they are connected with one another in a continuous growth, Hegel discovers that principle of unity in life which is the goal of his philosophy, and its most characteristic feature. According to this law, stated for the present in a purely formal way, everything falls

into a general schema that is made up of three terms. The first term, if taken as absolute, and as intelligible in itself, shows its inadequacy by suddenly negating itself, and turning over into its opposite; and then a third term comes in to unite the first two in a synthesis which, without suppressing either of them, is enabled to do justice to both, by taking away their independence, and reducing them to mere elements or moments in this larger whole.

But while this general contention of Hegel's, that the concepts, or forms of abstract thought, which we use, are to be understood only by reference to their place in the whole of experience, may not seem altogether unintelligible, it is not easy to be quite sure what he means when he interprets this, apparently, as a complete metaphysic, an account of the ultimate nature of reality itself. Instead of saying that reality is experience, Hegel more often says that reality is thought,

and it has accordingly been supposed that he means by this abstract thought, to the exclusion of sensation, and of immediate concrete life. Hegel is expressly on his guard to deny that he means by thought ordinary finite thinking, and so we may set this aside without further remark. It is easier to interpret him as meaning that reality is made up of these abstract thought relations with which the Logic deals, hypostasized in some fashion, and given an independent existence. The difficulties in the way of this are so obvious that it is not necessary to dwell upon them. What a reality is that is composed of relations, without anything to relate, no one ever has succeeded, or ever will succeed, in making plain. It is quite impossible to drop out that sensational element which makes experience concrete, and reduce everything to what an eminent contemporary thinker, in speaking of this interpretation of Hegel, has called an "unearthly ballet of bloodless

categories." And, indeed, Hegel has too many statements that are inconsistent with this notion to afford us very much justification in attributing it to him. While, however, he may not hold that there is nothing to reality but abstract thought, yet it is very difficult not to interpret him as saying that at least the beginning of the process which constitutes reality is a development of just such abstract thought categories. He expressly says that the development which he traces in the Logic, from pure Being to the Idea or Notion — a development which deals entirely with abstract concepts — is not anything that depends upon *our* thought, but is a growth of the subject-matter itself, a growth of reality. And we might infer the same thing from the relation in which the Logic stands to the rest of Hegel's system. There hardly seems to be any doubt that Hegel, in the latter part of his system, at least, intends to take reality, not as anything

that is fixed and present once for all, but as the process of development itself. This notion of development certainly seems essential when he comes to deal with Spirit, *i.e.*, with the concrete growth of humanity as exemplified in social and political life and institutions, morality, art, religion, and the like. But now in the treatment which Hegel gives, there is no break in the continuity of the process from beginning to end; just as one abstract category passes over into another in the Logic, so, when the end is reached, the supreme category passes over continously into Nature, and Nature into Spirit. So that a natural interpretation would be, that Hegel was actually trying to develop reality, in its entirety, out of mere abstract thought, which thus was the beginning and presupposition of the whole. We may perhaps suspect that Hegel himself never was quite clear about the matter, and that in his thought there were mixed up more motifs than one.

But however this may be, it is, I think, unfair to Hegel to make this the real essence of his doctrine. There is a far more definite conception which will explain most of his utterances, and it is altogether likely that this is what all the time lay back of his thought, even if he was not always quite consistent with it. On this interpretation, what he really had in mind as his absolute reality was, as has already been suggested, not abstract logical relations, but concrete life. A very large part of Hegel's work, that which comes under the head of Philosophy of Spirit, deals with such concrete reality in the realm of what practically amounts to a history of civilization, where he tries to show how the most abstract categories are concretely embodied; and this is, at any rate, not consistent with his taking thought, in the ordinary sense, as literally the sum and substance of the world. It would be a fair interpretation of his meaning, therefore, to treat the Logic, not as

the starting-point for his Absolute, but as in some sense the mechanism which is involved in every part of it. So when Hegel says that reality is thought, we should understand him as intending to say that reality is *meaning*. When he declares that sensation, or immediate experience, is unreal as compared with thought, he does not mean to deny the existence of sensation in favor of mere thinking, but only to say that in so far as experience is purely immediate and unreflective, in so far as the world comes to us simply as a brute fact, that is forced upon our senses without appealing to our reason, it is unreal and abstract, not reality in its fulness; and that reality is found in the interpreting of this, in finding out its relations and meaning in the process of experience as a whole.

Let us, in order to know just what we are talking about, think of that chain of widening experience which makes up our own life. Such an experience is a devel-

opment, which is coming all the time to a clearer consciousness of its own meaning; and this growth, through which elements of experience that come to us at first as mere facts which we have to accept, gradually take on value for our lives, are interpreted in their relations, is the work of thought, of reason: the more rational life is, the more it is real, and it is truly real only as it has thus been rationalized. If we substitute this word "rational" in Hegel's statement that reality is thought, we shall have more nearly what he has in mind. We can understand in this way what Hegel means when he speaks of the development of the thought categories in the Logic, not as a mere arbitrary matter of what *we* think about things, but as a self-development, a growth of reality. When we take reality simply as the process of experience, the question which concerned Kant, as to the possibility or impossibility of our applying the categories to a tran-

scendental something beyond, no longer is important; thought has its sole use as it stands for a revelation of the meaning of life; and this constantly progressive self-revelation is no arbitrary exercise of our subjective faculty of thinking, but a necessary development of thought itself, *i.e.*, of an experience ever becoming more rational and luminous; or, again, if we say that experience is reality, it is a development of reality. This will give a concrete meaning to Hegel's threefold schema, and his doctrine of negation, and of the union of contradictories. Since life is a growth, no achievement can be taken as final and complete in itself; its self-sufficiency has to be denied or negated, for by its very success it creates new conditions which introduce antagonisms, and so prevent our going on in the same way as before. But that does not mean that it is annulled completely, or that it passes out of our life, but only that, on the basis of it, we are

forced to find some larger conception of life that shall reconcile the jarring elements, while still allowing them to contribute their own particular value to the result. The richness of life is due just to its paradoxes, to the fact that it can take up these seemingly contradictory elements within itself, and by harmonizing, without destroying them, can make them minister to its own process of growth.

The abstract thought categories, therefore, would be the instruments by which this growth in experience is effected, and they are consequently always to be interpreted by reference to the whole of experience which is their presupposition, by reference to the process in which they occur. Whatever the ultimate interpretation may be, the justification of Hegel's inquiries is found in this, that, at any rate as we use it, a thought form, such as being, or substance, or quality, or causation, grows out of some particular need

of experience which thought is trying to meet, and that, consequently, we cannot take the category as if its value were already perfectly known, but must examine its connection and the occasion which gives rise to it. And the results which Hegel reaches often throw a great deal of light on the problems over which philosophy had been disputing for centuries without coming to a conclusion. Take, for an example, a thing and its qualities. Instead of saying, as earlier philosophers had done, that there is an unknown something in which qualities inhere, or else that there is no such thing, and that isolated qualities are the only reality, Hegel enables us to see that the terms are purely relative to each other, and that their use grows out of a teleological interest. What we call a single thing, whether an atom, or a grain of sand, or a sand heap, or a world, is determined, practically, by the particular end or interest we have in view: the unitary thing represents this unity of

end rather than any metaphysical underlying existence, while qualities are the various means bound up with the end. Or, again, the concept of force. Instead of taking force as an entity of some sort, Hegel asks when it is the concept is used; and he finds that it is used when, after taking some element of experience in an isolated way, we discover that it is not thus isolated, but has relations with the rest of experience, as indeed it must have, since it is an element in a single process; but instead of recognizing that this connection is the original thing, and that it is only by an abstraction that we set the element off by itself, we invent an external connection, force, to bridge over the gulf our own abstracting thought has made. In other words, Hegel explains the terms with which philosophy deals, not as ontological realities, but as tools which we use to meet the needs of a growing experience. Reality is thought, then, means simply this: that reality is

experience in a growing process of realizing its own meaning and value, and not content simply to take itself as it first comes, without reflection or meditation. And the Absolute is this whole process of growth.

Instead, then, of being the philosopher of abstractions, Hegel is concrete to the last degree. Against the abstract in his own sense of the term, that, namely, which has still got its meaning insufficiently worked out, he is indeed constantly waging war. And it is easy to recognize the value of his contention. To say that the *meaning* of life is what philosophy is concerned with, is to make philosophy practical, and is precisely the statement with which we started in the opening chapter. In trying now to show how the standpoint fails to be final and satisfactory, we should not lose sight of this very great gain.

It is already evident enough that Hegel's method of treatment is, from the

standpoint of previous philosophies, singularly elusive in its nature, and it will not be an easy task to grasp it with sufficient firmness to see just its relation to our more ordinary way of thinking; but if we can succeed in doing this, it will itself supply, essentially, the criticism which I shall have to offer. And we may notice, in the first place, that when Hegel finds his Absolute in the self-evident reality of Experience, or Life, he has no place to give to that which common sense means by the outer world, when this is thought of as existing apart from all human experience, as it must have existed, for instance, before sentient beings made their appearance on the earth. The external world can only exist, for Hegel, as it comes within experience; and by this Hegel cannot in consistency have reference to any hypothetical experience of an Absolute Being *distinct* from human life, but he must mean just the experience which is exem-

plified in that gradual coming to a knowledge of itself on the part of human consciousness, with which his system is concerned. And so the world, for Hegel, is created along with this process by which mankind comes to know it. The change from the Ptolemaic to the Copernican system was not the subjective recognition on the part of men of a fact which had existed long before it was thus discovered; it represented a real development in the objective world, in the only sense in which Hegel can speak of such a world. Since, however, the reality of the outer world furnishes a hard problem in itself, it will perhaps be better not to insist upon this point, but to confine our criticism to the more verifiable facts of "experience." Let us, then, notice two quite distinct things to which Hegel's concept of experience might be taken to apply. There is, first, what Kant called the individual experience. If I look back over my own life, it seems to

be made up of a set of concrete activities, or experiences, which form a definitely limited whole. It begins with my first beginnings of consciousness and will end with my death, and it is all along distinct from the experiences of other men; they may, indeed, know more or less about it, but no one but myself can *live* it. Or, on the other hand, we may apply the term to the experience of the race, to the sphere of universal history, which also is a development, and of which what I call my life is now only a part. It is clear that in these two uses the term "experience" is meant to stand for two distinct things, and that in both it is used quite intelligibly.

What marks, now, are there which, on the ordinary view, distinguish my experience from the experience of mankind which is expressed in universal history? For one thing, while my experience is objective, while, that is, it involves other men and things beside myself, yet we

generally suppose that it also has a sensational element which makes it in an equally true sense unique and unsharable. Every experience of mine is a particular fact, which as such is distinct in existence from all the other facts in the universe, however closely it may be related to them. If two men are looking at the same object, the similarity of the reference does not prevent the first man's experience from being quite other than the second man's, for the two sensations involved are facts which are forever distinct. And the continuity of experience which this sensational element gives, and which enables us to call a certain set of experiences ours, while others, again, are not ours, we do not usually imagine to extend beyond the limits of an individual life. My life is connected, indeed, with the history of the world; the influence which the world exerts, both through heredity and through my spiritual environment, is enough to show this; but there is not

supposed to be a continuity of consciousness of the same nature as that which is exhibited in my individual experience from day to day. On the contrary, social development is made up of a host of such unitary conscious lives, each, as immediate experiences, separate from the others, though united with them through a community of interests and purposes, and a relation to a common world; there is not supposed to be any conscious realization of this unity except on the part of different individuals, whereas it is an essential element in what we commonly understand by a real unity of experience, that it should on its own part immediately recognize itself as such. This more inclusive reality comes, indeed, in a way within the life of the individual, but it is as something which also is known to exist on its own account.

It is an undoubted fact, then, that in common thought we mean two very different things when we speak of an indi-

vidual's experience, and when we speak of that growth of experience which is shown in the history of mankind; and that both of these, moreover, seem to be concrete realities, of which philosophy has to take account. We are, therefore, in a position now to ask what attitude Hegel adopts towards these two different uses of the term, and the distinction we invariably recognize between them; and we have a right to demand that he should not confuse or ignore that difference.

Let us notice once more what Hegel's essential object is. What he is after is to show that those distinctions which had been taken to denote hard and fast separations, in reality do nothing of the kind; but that anything we can fasten on reveals, when its implications are worked out, the unity which is its presupposition. This unity is the reality of development in self-conscious experience. Instead of having one reality God, and

another reality the world, and still other separate realities, a host of individual selves, we have just the one unity of experience, which would correspond to God; and everything else can be shown to have its existence within this unitary conscious process, and to possess no independent reality at all. Now, in general, the criticism I shall make is this, that Hegel confuses the two meanings of experience which have just been noticed. I shall try to show that he gets his point of view, his method, from what everybody else calls the individual experience, and that with reference to such experience his results are valid; but then he transfers this, without very clearly indicating how, to something quite different, the universe of reality, and in this sphere his statements will no longer hold true.

That Hegel gets his method from an analysis of individual experience is shown, in the first place, by the relation in which he stands to Kant. Kant represents the

common-sense standpoint, and he is careful to state that the experience he is talking about, within which the categories apply, is the subjective experience of the individual, taken, of course, as an intelligible unity, and not as a mere string of conscious states in time; and Hegel, whatever his interpretation, is evidently in his Logic working with just the same facts. Now simply to ignore Kant's distinction between individual experience and the larger world of reality, as Hegel does, and to transfer what is meant of the one directly to the other, is a proceeding which renders it forever impossible to justify to common sense the results at which we arrive. We have a definite idea of what we mean by each, and if any one refuses to be content with the distinction as an ultimate one, he at least owes it to common sense to keep clear the fact that, in any case, the distinction is made. Let us, then, examine again what Kant and other philosophers,

as well as the majority of men who are not philosophers, call the conscious life experience of an individual, ignoring for the moment all other reality whatever. And it will be seen that Hegel's statements apply to it very closely. Such an experience is a unity, or else I could not speak of it as *my* life; and it is a unity of development. It is a unity, again, which is the presupposition of all those distinctions which I call myself, and other selves, and the external world; or to put it, according to the common-sense notion, more exactly, any *recognition*, or knowledge, of an object, or of myself and other selves, must be explained by reference to the process of experience of which this recognition is a part, and by definition we are ignoring anything that may be implied in a self or object beyond this immediate fact of experience. This is nothing but the modern method of psychology, which is based on the postulate, that, in order to understand

the conscious life, we must start with its unity, not with the diversity of its separate elements. Any object, in so far as it comes within this experience, arises to meet the needs of the experience as a whole, and disappears when it is no longer required. I do not as a rule take notice of an object as such, unless it is connected with what I am interested in, and this interest stands for a wider reach of experience than the mere perception of the object does, and is needed in order to account for it. So also my neighbor, or even myself, as elements in my experience, are only parts of a whole, and they come and go according to psychological laws which, in the last resort, depend upon the one life process. That entire panorama which passes before my gaze when I think of my life experience, from its most indefinite beginnings in the infant consciousness to the full flow of life in manhood, a panorama wherein every conceivable sort of reality is represented, is

the expression of a single process, which has to be regarded as a unity before we can explain psychologically any of the particular elements within it. And, again, it is in such an experience as this that the thought categories which Hegel discusses in the Logic must find their application. Hegel, as we saw, no longer found the value of the categories, as the rationalist had done, in their ability to give us information about noumenal reality, but rather in the practical use which they serve in rationalizing experience. And moreover, he declares that the development which he traces is a real development, and not a mere matter of our subjective thought. Now it is possible to interpret Hegel's treatment in the Logic as if he meant to say that reality already exists complete, in a form which reveals within itself these thought relationships with which the Logic deals; and that they form so thoroughly articulated a whole that, if we take the very simplest category, we find ourselves

continually led on and on by threads of connection, until at last we get intellectual satisfaction only when we have arrived at the completed system. But if we accept this interpretation, we have to admit that after all there is no movement in reality itself, since this exists complete from the start, and that the only development is in our ideas about reality, and is due to our wholly unjustifiable procedure in attempting in the first place to tear away one single element of existence from the connection in which alone it is real, and to set it off by itself. But this seems to be doing just what Hegel warns us not to do, reducing the development, namely, to a mere subjective process of thinking about the universe. And if we give up the idea of development here, we must do it everywhere else also, and without the idea of development, Hegel is no longer Hegel. How can we retain, then, in Hegel's treatment of the categories, the idea of growth as an essential element? We have seen that if

we take him too literally, we must think of the Logic as the actual beginning of the process which constitutes the Absolute; and this notion of thought categories developing by themselves in a vacuum is much too subversive of our customary mental habits to account for the real and practical value of Hegel's results. The only alternative seems to be, as has been suggested, to suppose that Hegel has in mind that actual growth in concrete experience which, since it is a rationalization of life, can only be effected by using the thought categories as its tools; and that he is trying to show the part which these various thought instruments play in the unitary process of life. Such a progressive rationalization of experience must involve a corresponding evolution in the complexity of the categories which are used, and so these get their movement from the living growth in experience which they subserve. But now thought, and so the thought categories, in so far as

it serves the purposes of growth in experience, is used only to meet particular situations in which development is called for; and since Hegel had access to no kind of reality that other men also were not in possession of, there was no place where he could look to find the use of his categories embodied, when he left generalities and came down to the definite facts of life, except in concrete, special experiences; and it is such definite, concrete experiences, in Kant's meaning again, which belong to the life of the individual.

Clearly, however, it cannot be such an experience as this which Hegel has intended for his Absolute. The amount of conscious activity which we are thus able to bring into a unitary connection is comparatively scanty. The rounded whole of experience which I call mine of yesterday connects with experience of the days and months and years before, but as I go further back the stream continually nar-

rows, and it only takes a few years to bring it to an end. Similarly, I can go on in imagination into the future, but here again the whole thing, so far as human knowledge goes, is ended with my death. In order to get beyond solipsism, Hegel has to mean, and evidently he does mean, what common sense has in mind in the growth of experience in the human race, from the beginnings of history to the present day, — a reality of which my experience is only a very small part. And the only manner in which it seems easy to account for the off-hand way in which Hegel apparently passes from one conception to the other, using them interchangeably as suits his purpose, is to suppose that he has failed to note what is for common sense a very important distinction. We have seen that the individual experience is objectively constituted, that there are represented in it, namely, all those elements which are to be found in the larger reality of which it is a part — the world of external

things, the existence of men and nations, the facts of history, and of the growth of civilization. Otherwise, of course, we should be unable to talk about these things. And it looks as if, on account of this, Hegel had assumed that when we talk of experience such as Kant had meant, a set of particular experiences in which the world and history are represented in terms of *knowledge*, we were by that very fact bringing the world and history themselves into this same unity of experience; and that no distinction, accordingly, needed to be admitted, such as we have tried to establish above. The presence of a reference to, a representation of, realities within a unitary process, is taken as sufficient proof that the realities themselves are connected, and connected in just the same way. Because, in a state of consciousness which we call a knowing state, the object necessarily implies a subject, — which simply means, in other words, that if I am to know an object, the reference to, the fact of *meaning*

this object, must come within a unitary consciousness, whose being a unity enables me to call it mine, — it therefore is concluded that the object referred to, which is quite a different matter, must be a part of this same unitary consciousness. But this, as was said above, is to ignore a very vital difference, the difference between experiencing, and knowing. In so far as the world is actually a part of that unity of experience which Kant had in mind, it has no existence when we cease to be conscious of it; when we mean the real world, however, we do not speak of experiencing it directly, but of *knowing* it, and knowledge implies the separate existence of the world outside the unity of experience in which the knowledge of it plays a part. An object or a self, as a part of experience, is only a *reference to* a concrete reality which has its own existence; and in this existence it is not experienced, in the sense in which *we* can speak of experience, but only known. My neighbor's actual thoughts and sensa-

tions and feelings, whatever makes up concretely his life, are not present in that experience of mine in which my neighbor plays a part: this as an experience is just a reference to the real neighbor, who is all the time enjoying his own life. So when I think of my own self even, and so my self forms an element of experience, this real self of actual experiencing lies in the past or future, and what is now actually present is an allusion to it. It is impossible, in other words, to keep out of knowledge this transcendent reference to realities beyond the knowing experience itself, and, in the case of external objects and of other selves at least, having no such connection with it that one can be shown to grow out of the other, and to form with it a unitary whole. The knowledge of my neighbor as an experience forms an actual element in the unity of experience which makes up my life; the neighbor who is thus known, however, does not, so far as appearance goes, enter into such a unity.

Will it, then, still be possible in any way for Hegel to maintain, of reality as a whole, that unity which he declares to be a certain and transparent fact? It is not, in the first place, at all clear that Hegel can even get out of solipsism, and justify that which common sense means by reality in the larger sense. Since Hegel does not recognize the external reference in knowledge, but only knowledge as an immediate experience, it does not appear how, if he keeps to such experience as can be verified, he can ever get back of what common sense calls his own life. Any object in the external world is, for Hegel, exhausted in its value for experience; while it is only by taking objects as having an existence of their own, that we are enabled to get back to history at all, in any sense in which this also is not exhausted in our own special unity of experience. But without dwelling upon this, let us suppose that we have in some way got at

that which ordinary people mean by the growth of experience as represented in history as a whole; are we any the better off?

It may be said at once that there is a certain application of his principles which Hegel makes to the development of society, and makes very successfully. This has to do with the tracing of those general social movements which make up the growth of civilization. The laws which govern the transitions of social life from the savage state up to modern industrial society, the changes by which democracy is evolved from a primitive despotism, all the movements whereby the spiritual acquisitions of humanity crystallize into institutions, which play their part on the stage of history, only to give place in time to other and more adequate ones,—facts of this sort very naturally will show a connection with those principles which govern the growth of the individual life, for the reason that social life is real only

in so far as it is embodied in the concrete experiences of individuals. But while the results which such a method can give are sufficient for sociology, and are of very great value in their place, they do not settle the metaphysical question as to what relation these so-called individual lives, as concrete and sensational facts, bear to the social whole, and, more ultimately, to the universe. As applied to social growth, the principles of which we now are talking leave the apparent reality and separateness of individual lives out of their account; they profess to deal only with general movements, which abstract from particular men and women. But now the absolute reality, or God, is for Hegel a reality which is supposed to include, in an intelligible way, all other reality within its own life, and this means that it includes finite selves as well. It is, therefore, a vital point in Hegel's theory that this connection should be rendered perfectly clear.

We have seen that the relation of the individual experience to the *recognition* of selves as they enter into it, furnishes just such a conception as Hegel is looking for; taken in this way, as a reference, not as the concrete reality referred to, the self has no existence except as, back of it, there is implied the one unitary experience to which it belongs. And this seems to be the conception on which Hegel actually relies. It is this concept of experience, Kant's individual experience, which alone is so obviously a unity for us that we can assume it without further proof. It is only when it is applied to the psychological origin of such references within individual experience, the origin of our knowledge of things, not the origin of the things themselves, that the argument which has been already noticed is sufficient, the argument that since everything, the individual included, arises for us only as an element within experience, we can-

not make experience itself belong to that which only is a part of it. A knowledge of myself can, indeed, arise only within experience, but that does not prevent the experience from still being mine, individually; for what I mean by myself is just the whole concrete unity of experience, within which the knowledge is an element, a conscious unity which *experiences* only itself, but which knows itself and a great many other things besides. Accordingly there is at the start a presumption that the notion will not continue to apply to the wider sphere of reality, if we keep clear the distinction which common sense draws, and do not, as Hegel does, allow the two to be merged together.

It must of course be admitted freely that there is *some sense* in which the individual is to be regarded as an element in the larger life of the world, as having its place fixed and its meaning determined by the part it plays in the econ-

omy of the universe. But it is not a question as to whether this is true in some sense, but whether it is true in the particular sense which Hegel asserts, whether, that is, the individual and God have a relation, not of independent personalities, but of such mutual implication that one is a mere moment in the life of the other, not separate from it in any degree. Is, in other words, the ultimate reality, God, of a nature which is adequately expressed in the self-evident reality of Experience, or Consciousness, or Life, which thus is made more fundamental than any self which is conscious, which experiences and lives?

If we look to the world on its physical side, as it is interpreted by the theory of evolution, we do get a suggestion of the unity we are in search of. Every step in the process of evolution has its interpretation by reference to the whole line of development; each physical movement has its vital connection with the

whole world mechanism, and involves shiftings of energy throughout the entire fabric, which, again, are connected continuously with similar transformations in the past and future. But such a development is what we call a physical fact, and of course we cannot transform it without further ceremony into a fact of consciousness, unless we are ready to assert that development of which, through knowledge, we are conscious, means precisely the same thing as a conscious development, and, therefore, can be used interchangeably with it.

We need, then, not simply the concept of a physical development, but of one which is conscious of itself and its own meaning. But even if we were to take the external world as such a conscious development, this would not answer the problem we are now considering; for while the physical activities of our bodies would form part of this development, there would still remain our *conscious* lives, those units

of self-conscious experience which we call finite selves, and which, as we have seen, have enough apparent separateness from the world and from one another, enough of an existence of their own, to make it a very real problem how, in their case, the more inclusive unity could still be maintained. One way of doing this, and perhaps the most obvious one, would be, not by denying the fact either of the individual consciousness or of the wider world consciousness in any way, but only by taking the supposed limitation of the former as an illusion, and by regarding it as forming, when we get back of appearance to reality, a continuous fabric with the rest of existence, an element in the whole just as a single sensation is an element in the conscious unity of our own lives. This is a theory which will need to be considered later; but if we keep to the interpretation which has been suggested in the present chapter, it is not the answer which Hegel himself would make. Hegel

requires something more than that a finite self should reflect, in a decidedly inadequate way, the meaning of reality as it already exists along with, and more inclusive than, the self; he requires a conscious unity of growth, wherein every activity which, by abstraction, we call a particular activity, in reality sums up the whole process so far as it has gone as yet, *is* the whole at that particular stage. There is no single activity that can be looked at in any other way than as a unitary conscious whole in a particular expression; it does not simply copy a more perfect reality which already exists, but is itself a condition of this more perfect reality, a step in the development which constitutes it.

And if we keep to the facts of what everybody calls *conscious* experience, as Hegel is obliged to do, we can see, again, that the conception may be made to apply to the experience of an individual, but fails us just as soon as we take it beyond this limited sphere. Let us take as an ex-

ample the active attempt to solve a problem in geometry. This is an experience which forms a whole, and which, so far as its own consciousness is concerned, excludes for the time being all the rest of the world. It is, however, an experience which is not accomplished all at once, but which in its accomplishment passes through a series of connected stages. Now if we take any one particular stage, the act, say, of drawing a line, we may maintain in an intelligible way that this act *is* the experience taken at a particular point. Just at that moment it is the whole thing; the past and future exist only as summed up in it; and this is possible because, as a stage in the whole, the meaning of the entire act is expressing itself in it. We should not draw this particular line except as we were governed by what we had already done, and by what we were still going to do.

And this seems to be the only definite and verifiable way in which Hegel's re-

quirements are capable of being met. But if we transfer this to anything else than such concrete experiences as solving a problem would be, we find that the analogy breaks down. Drawing the line is literally the whole thing at that particular point; there is more that is past, and more that is to follow, but just at this moment it exhausts the field. So we may admit, too, that the whole experience of solving the problem is part of a larger unity which extends before and after it, of a larger purpose which the solution serves, and that at just this point it *is* the larger purpose; and so we may go on till we reach the unity of the life experience as a whole. But the larger reality of which such a unity can be predicated transcends the special phase always in the direction of the past and future, and never is something that is contemporaneous with it, or else the latter could not be said literally to *be* reality, but could only be a part of it, and the other part would have to be recog-

nized as having a separate existence with reference to it. So that there are only two courses for Hegel to take. Either he must say that any concrete experience that forms a conscious unity, such as the experience of solving a problem in geometry, or of walking, or of eating, does at that particular moment exhaust the reality of the world, — and then there is nothing to choose between him and the subjective idealist; or else he must admit that, along at the same time with this particular experience, and external to it so far as its own consciousness of itself is concerned, other reality exists, at least the reality of other men's experience, if not the reality of the external world. But if at the same moment different facts of experience exist which are mutually unconscious of one another, it is no longer possible to see how they form a unity such as is expressed by calling them moments in a single conscious process; that, again, is a unity which will apply to a single stream of

experience like an individual life, where each phase, so long as it continues, is literally all that exists; but some other conception is required to account for the connection of two active experiences which, without either recognizing the other, are going on at precisely the same time. For we are here shut off from a claim which another philosopher might perhaps make, that implicitly, though not consciously, all the rest of reality is involved; for if the unity of conscious experience is the definition of reality, except as it comes within a *conscious* unity nothing can exist.

To refer back, then, to the statement which was made in starting, Hegel is not wrong in making reality consist in meaning, but only in interpreting meaning to the exclusion of that *which is meant.* What constitutes the reality of any individual experience is, indeed, its meaning, its relation to the whole universe of reality of which it is a part.

But this implies not simply the particular experience and its own realization of its value, but it also implies the existence, on its own account, of all that other reality without which the meaning would disappear; and this side of existence, of reality which is known without being actually present in the experience which knows it, Hegel fails to do justice to. As soon, then, as this is recognized, we discover that, whatever we may say about the external world, at least those sets of experiences which we call finite selves remain, as existences, in a real sense distinct, each with its own sensational filling, and that they require some other connecting bond than the simple concept of "experience." In other words, Hegel's philosophy is an acute and valuable *psychology of the individual and of society*, not a science of the universe. As a science of the universe it must maintain, on its most favorable showing, that the growth in the appreciation of the world

and of life which the human race has so far accomplished *is* God, is reality, and the mere statement of this result is enough to condemn it.

AGNOSTICISM AND THE THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

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IT is not easy to state in a summary way the advantages which have resulted to philosophy from Hegel's treatment of its problems, but two or three of the most important of them may be briefly recapitulated. Hegel was able at once to make the meaning of life concrete, with a definite value for its own sake, and to bring it under the unity of a single principle. He made it concrete, because he ceased to take abstract thought as the means of getting at some ulterior reality in a world of abstractions, and found its use in the growth of experience itself; and, similarly, since the use

of knowledge was not to copy a more perfect existence simply, but to enrich experience, each stage of experience was given the manifest value belonging to an essential step in the process of growth. The same concept of a growing process enabled him to reduce the conscious life to a unitary principle, by doing away with the dead fixedness which had been so common in the notion of reality, and by making it, instead, dynamic and active. In this way, the distinctions which thought introduces into life no longer stood side by side as mere variety, each on its own basis, with only an external connection, but they could now be interpreted with reference to the one active process of development. And so we are able to solve the problem of earlier philosophy, and get a unity which shall not be abstract, apart from variety, but a unity *in* variety, a unity which, as intelligent and active purpose, takes up the complexity of means which are needed for its ac-

complishment as an essential part of itself. And while Hegel's conception, if the criticism in the preceding chapter is justified, cannot, just as it stands, be taken as a philosophy of the universe, we yet may hold that its value for such a philosophy is very considerable. By showing that all the thought categories lead up to, and have their explanation by reference to, the highest category of self-conscious experience, Hegel has shown the futility of finding the essence of reality in such partial categories as matter, or force, or substance; and we can therefore look with some confidence on the conscious self as at least the type which most adequately represents reality, and as pointing the direction in which a key to the nature of the universe is to be found.

With Hegel we reach the culmination of one line of development from Kant. Along with objective idealism, the other two types of theory which have played

the most important part in the later development of philosophy are, on the one side, agnosticism, and on the other, the various forms of what perhaps may be called theistic idealism. Both of these owe a great deal to Kant, but particularly the former, as it was this result which Kant himself explicitly adopted. The same tendency has been greatly strengthened also by recent scientific thought. Kant's agnosticism, it will be remembered, was based on this, that the intellectual forms of abstract thought, which hitherto had been supposed to give us reality, were, as he discovered, only capable of being used if they were supplied with material cast in the form of space and time; and as these latter forms seemed to him to be purely subjective, it followed that the nature of things as they are in themselves is completely hidden from us. While dispensing with much of Kant's machinery, modern scientific agnosticism is essen-

tially of the same type. It also starts from the subjective nature of our sense experience. Science shows how sensations of color, and sound, and taste, do not in reality represent the nature of the outside world, but are due to the peculiar construction of our sense organs; and yet as sensations appear to be forced upon us, it assumes that there is something more original than the sensations themselves, which by its action on the senses gives rise to them. Since, however, all our knowledge is cast in a sensuous mould, it is necessarily relative to our sensuous mechanism, and never reveals what the reality is in its own existence.

It is well to notice, however, an important difference in attitude between Kant and the modern scientist. Kant was profoundly interested in the nature of things-in-themselves, and it was, indeed, his purpose to show that, while we cannot prove the spiritual character of this ulti-

mate reality, and its consonancy with man's highest interests, yet it is equally impossible for the sceptic to disprove it; and so there is no necessary contradiction in accepting the existence of God, freedom, and immortality, in case there are reasons for doing this other than intellectual. These reasons Kant himself found in the moral life. The scientific agnostic, on the other hand, is commonly very well content to leave questions about the ultimate nature of reality unanswered. It seems to him that the phenomenal world is all that is of any interest to us. So long as we can detect the laws of phenomena, and use them practically in furthering the interests of man in the world, what reason is there, he will ask, that we should worry ourselves over what lies back of phenomena, and never enters into human life at all? Before we look at the intellectual grounds for agnosticism, let us consider this emotional attitude which it involves.

And a distinction may be drawn

here between agnosticism, and scepticism. Scepticism, in its pure form, is simply a criticism of existing theories, and a demand to know their basis and criterion; it is not a positive theory itself. Agnosticism goes beyond this in saying that reality is of a special kind, a kind which is unknowable, and which at least, then, is different from anything that sense experience can give us. But agnosticism and scepticism may both agree in questioning the value of any other knowledge than that practical and everyday knowledge which is sufficient to satisfy our material needs.

To this common objection to the claims of philosophy, the objection that, if we can know enough to govern our actions in the world, and make such use of natural forces as is needed to assist us in our purposes, we have everything that can be of any value to us, there are two things to be said. In the first place, such knowledge hardly guarantees all that we require

even for this purely practical need. It is, and must be, just a rule of thumb knowledge, which is based upon no insight into the real nature of the phenomena with which we have to do; and it therefore leaves us, necessarily and forever, in the position of mere empiricists, with no rational foundation for believing that our practical empire over nature is anything but accidental, and so liable to be overturned at any moment. But apart from this, the assertion is not true that we can be content merely with what insures us a practical control over natural forces, as if every one would be quite happy if he had enough to eat and wear. The scientific spirit is itself much more than this. The scientist does not study electricity in order directly to apply it to telegraphs and electric motors, but he is interested in it on its own account, as showing the innermost construction of the world; and if he did not feel that he was getting at reality thereby, his work would lose half its zest

for him. And just this interest which is the life of science, the interest in knowing what things really are, is of itself an answer to the claim that it does not matter to us whether we get at the reality beyond phenomena or not. If there is a more ultimate reality than that of the phenomena with which science deals, it is useless to tell us that our interest should stop with the surface appearance, and refuse to penetrate beneath it; that is what it never will consent to do. And this desire to know what things really are, as opposed to what they seem to be, is no mere idle curiosity; it belongs with our desire to grasp the meaning of life itself. It cannot be a matter of unconcern whether reality, in its final statement, is akin to us, something which justifies and backs up those interests which we recognize as highest in human life, or whether the latter are but an unessential incident upon the surface of a universe which, at its heart, is quite indifferent to them. While there remains

so large a part of our experience as that which is constituted by our relations to the outer world, which refuses to take its place within the ideal values of life, and remains an alien and contingent element, the harmony which we seek in life is put beyond our reach.

A somewhat similar reply can be made to those who would have us find in humanitarian interests, in the relationships which constitute human society, a final and satisfactory account of all we can say about reality, which stands in no need of any more ultimate knowledge to give it sanction. It may very well be true that no values exist apart from the social whole, and that this supplies us with the best key we can get to the inner meaning of the world. But still it is impossible to ignore the fact that *human* life is but an infinitely small part of that universe in which it is placed, and that we cannot, with the agnostic, set aside as unimportant the relations which human life bears to reality

as a whole, without taking the foundation out from under the validity of social interests themselves. If humanity has no justification in the ultimate constitution of things, it is impossible that it should make any permanent demand upon our loyalty and reverence. The agnostic can exalt humanity, only because, in spite of his creed, he feels that here he has got into some true contact with the real; and if he does not feel this, he will inevitably pass over into cynicism, or at best into a mood of good-natured toleration.

But whether we desire to know the nature of reality or not, of course we might just as well give the whole thing up first as last, if it is true, as the agnostic claims, that such knowledge is denied us; and this leads to the second point, the criticism of agnosticism on the intellectual side, as a philosophical theory for which definite arguments are adduced. And in a negative way, the most obvious reason for refusing assent to the claims which the

agnostic makes is this, that if it really were true that knowledge is confined simply to phenomena, then by no possibility could we ever be aware of it. There is a contradiction in saying that things-in-themselves exist, but that we cannot know them; if we know that they exist, then they cannot be unknowable, for at least their existence is known, and, it may be added, their positive causal relation to phenomena also. And if we have this very definite and important knowledge, by what right are we to be compelled to stop here? In principle there is no difference between this knowledge and any further knowledge we may wish to claim; an argument to prove we cannot know *what* things are, tells equally against the knowledge *that* they are. It has been seen already, in speaking of Kant, that it is the principle of causation upon which it is relied to prove that things-in-themselves exist, and that if our knowledge is of a truth confined within the realm of phenom-

ena, this principle will apply only to phenomenal existence, and will not take us a step beyond. So that if it were actually true that our knowledge is simply of phenomena, we should indeed, as a matter of fact, be confined within a certain field, but then, too, we should be perfectly satisfied with this, and should never suspect that there was anything beyond it. In knowing the limits, we have already implicitly passed beyond them.

What, then, is the flaw in the arguments by means of which the agnostic attempts to prove that our knowledge of reality must be a knowledge of appearance only, and never of things in their own proper nature? In order to answer the question, it will be necessary to scrutinize more carefully what is implied in the possibility of any knowledge at all. We have seen that there are two questions which are concerned here: the nature of knowledge as a process of knowing, an immediate experience,

and the nature of the external reference which knowledge involves. This latter problem idealism practically ignores. Subjective idealism assumes that states of consciousness, sensations, tell us about themselves, but not about anything besides; that we have the sensation as an assured fact, but anything beyond this only as an inference. Hegelianism does not confine knowledge to sensations, indeed, for it recognizes that our experience is not of sensations merely, but of objective things; but still it holds that the object exists only for experience, which, as has been seen, must logically mean either the individual, or, at best, the race experience, and that it stands for no separate abiding reality beyond, and existing simultaneously with, the experience which knows it.

The earlier attempts to solve this second aspect of the problem of knowledge were based on very crude material analogies, and can easily be recognized

now as having no real explanatory value. The mind was looked on as a sort of blank paper, or wax tablet, and then external things somehow came in and impressed a copy of themselves upon it. This fancy, besides depending on an uncritical analogy, also carried the implication with it that the object was like the copy which it made in consciousness; and as the scientific conception of the world gained ground, and the purely subjective nature of sensation seemed to be established, it naturally would fall away. But now if we are left with sensations as the only facts immediately given, and sensations which are wholly unlike the reality which causes them, how are we to know there is such a reality at all? The word "cause" suggests the answer which has most commonly been made; we know reality beyond our own consciousness by an act of thought, as the result of a process of reasoning based on the notion of causa-

tion. The rationalist could do this with a good conscience, for he had the necessary tools at hand, in the shape of self-evident truths; but the sensationalist came back just as truly to the same idea. He had his sensations, and he wished to get beyond them; and the only way was by assuming that the sensations did not furnish a sufficient reason for their own existence, and so must have a cause. In so far, then, as the question was consciously put at all, our knowledge of the outer world was regarded as an inference, depending on an act of abstract thinking, with the notion of causation as its basis.

Now this whole assumption, that it is only sensations that are known immediately, and that our knowledge of external objects is an indirect inference, may be called in question. Is it true that sensations are known any more directly than objects are? So much of the assertion is of course true, that we

cannot *experience* anything which is not *our* experience, but the confusion comes in confounding experiencing with *knowing*. Let us distinguish, then, between an immediate *awareness of*, and a mediate *knowledge about*. And there has already been occasion to notice, in the chapter on sensationalism, that the former by itself is insufficient to carry us a step. An experience, as merely conscious of itself in an immediate way, tells us nothing whatever about anything else, and when it ceases to be directly experienced it is gone forever, and is incapable of leaving a trace behind. In order to examine a conscious state, and *know it as such*, we have to depend upon memory, and then it is not the conscious state *which is known* that is immediately experienced, but the state of knowing it; a thing which is known is never as such a direct matter of experience. Since, then, it is a question, for philosophy at least, not of merely experiencing a sen-

sation, but of knowing it as a sensation, a state of consciousness is not given to us, for knowledge, as the immediate, indubitable fact which it has been claimed to be, but it raises just the same questions that an external object raises.

Just as it is not true that we immediately experience states of consciousness *as* subjective, so it is not true, either, that, in point of fact, we get at the outer world by an indirect inference. Sensationalism supposes that first there comes the consciousness of a sensation, and then, by a complicated process of reasoning, this is taken to involve in some way a reality distinct from it. No one who will examine what actually happens when he looks at an object can fail to see how purely mythological this description is; he certainly will find that he has no consciousness of any inference, and no consciousness, even, that there are two things involved, a sensation and an object, but the seeing of the object will appear

to him to be a purely immediate and unitary act. Before we ask, however, what really is involved in the possibility of an act of knowledge, let us consider first the nature of a conscious experience of any kind.

If we examine any conscious experience which is accessible to us, we shall find that any element in it which we can pin down and fix, as in some sort an existence, can be described in terms of sensation, including under this term those so-called revived sensations which are called images. From one point of view, then, our conscious life may be reduced to a chain of such sensational facts, and it is this which is the justification of what the sensationalist contends for. The sensationalist is wrong, however, in saying that this chain of sensations is the original stuff from which all the conscious life is secondarily derived. We have already seen that what we have originally is not a

lot of sensations, but a whole of experience, out of which the sensations are differentiated; and that the attempt to build up everything by merely adding sensations together has been a failure. It is no adequate description of the facts to speak of life as made up of a passive flow of conscious states; it clearly is far more than this, however the "more" may be described. My experience in eating an apple is not a sensation of sight, plus a sensation of touch, plus a sensation of taste, but it is just what it purports to be — the experience of eating an apple. What is it, then, that the sensationalist leaves out of his account?

If we try to supply the missing element, we shall find that it is most adequately characterized as the element of activity. By conscious activity is meant simply this: a process which is governed all along by some end or purpose, which is present at each stage, selecting between possible alternatives, and shaping

the course in which consciousness shall flow; so that at the end there is the recognition of having accomplished something, which something is the reason and justification of all that had gone before. There is not simply a string of disconnected existences, but the whole is bound together into a unity by this teleological reference. The end is not a fact which is added to the parts, but it is accomplished in them; each element that we can distinguish has its particular place with reference to the end in view, and only with reference to this does it possess meaning. Purpose, conscious or unconscious, intended or actual, is what characterizes normal experience, and gives it all the worth that it possesses. We do not have to think, therefore, of the spiritual element in experience as something which is superadded to the sensational life, in a higher realm of being, as Plato conceived of it, but as the inner spirit which presides over and animates

all experience. All experience alike is sensational, but all alike is also more than this; it is a conscious *act*, wherein the elements of sensation and of image are disposed and used in relation to a unifying end. Sensation or image must be present to give content and reality to life, otherwise it would lack substance and body, would be moving in the vacuum of pure abstraction; but it is there not as bare fact, mere sensation, but as an element in an activity which uses it for its own ends, an activity in which every part fits into and aims towards the accomplishment of a purpose, which expresses itself in the entire process, and governs it at every stage. This activity cannot be found, of course, in any special element, because it is present everywhere; we cannot lay our finger on it as a particular bit of existence, as we can on a sensation, for that would be to arrest it, and it could not be arrested without being by that very fact destroyed.

By drawing this distinction, then, between the sensational content in experience, and the use to which this is put, we may perhaps be better able to understand what is involved in an act of knowledge. That the distinction in general is a valid one is shown most clearly by the modern psychology of the concept. A consistent sensationalistic philosophy attempts to do away with the concept, or abstract idea, *in toto*. What is meant, asked Berkeley, by the idea of a table which is no particular table, has no particular size, or shape, or color, but only such qualities in general? When I look into my mind I find nothing of this sort, but always a particular image, confused, perhaps, and indistinct, but still different from any other image; or else I find just a name, a word. And modern psychology finds no fault with this so far as it goes; the image always *is* a particular image, but the image is not the abstract idea. This latter is involved rather in

the use to which we put the image; we use the image to mean or stand for any or every one of a number of actual tables, and it is in this conscious *meaning* which we have that the essence of the concept consists. We shall have, then, an explanation of the possibility of knowledge which apparently does not distort the facts, if we suppose that, as the particular image is lost sight of in its conceptual use, so in a somewhat similar way a sensational content in experience may come to us without claiming any interest whatever on its own account, as an immediate experience, but with a claim to represent directly another reality beyond itself. Let us examine this first in a case where the knowledge is of something in our own experience.

If we take an instance of remembering our former perception of an object, psychology will show that there is present, in the act of remembering, an image, in some shape or other, that represents

this previous experience. This image either is a fainter copy of the actual sensation we had in looking at the object, or else it stands indirectly for such a copy by association, and would ultimately issue in it. But while I am in the act of remembering, I am not conscious of this image as an image, a present experience, though of course I am actually passing through a present experience of which the image is a part; but the image stands for another experience in the past, with which alone my thought is now occupied. So that the image has apparently the power, not indirectly and as a matter of inference, but immediately and originally, of *meaning* something which existed in the past, but does not now exist, and which, therefore, lies beyond the experience which knows it. And this is all that knowledge means in any case; the only difference, when we come to external perception, lies in this, that here the reality which the sensational content

stands for, means, is a reality which never formed, as the perception of the object did, a section in that continuous stream of experience which we call ours. All we have to suppose is that a particular fact of sensation in our own experience copies, or sufficiently resembles, a similar content in a reality beyond our experience; and that this sensation calls no attention to its own existence, but comes originally with a claim that it means, refers to, the reality beyond, which we thus are able to know, without its ever coming, as an existence, within our conscious life. Consequently, we do not need to deny the apparent testimony of experience, that the perception of an object is an immediate and unitary act. It is quite true that we are not conscious of the sensation, and of the object to which it refers, in the same act; when the sensation *means* an external object, it loses itself in this meaning, and to know it *as* a sensation requires a second experience,

distinct from the perception of the object. So, also, the object is perceived without any process of inference being interposed. The fact of claiming to tell us about something beyond itself is not a fact which we can explain or deduce, but it is an ultimate datum. We cannot prove, either, that the claim is a valid one, in any absolute sense of the term "proof"; for since knowledge is the only possible way we have of reaching a reality that lies beyond our own immediate experience, it is out of the question for us to think of getting such reality, by any other means, within our experience bodily, for the sake of testing it; those practical tests which ordinarily are sufficient for us we cannot use, because these already presuppose what we want to prove. But this result is not scepticism. It is true, we are compelled to take the claim of knowledge in a sense on faith, but it is not a groundless faith, for practically we must admit the claim in order

to so much as doubt it. Doubt must affect the claim of memory to reproduce the past, just as really as it does the claim of sense perception to reproduce the outer world; and unless we grant what memory calls for, we must give up all attempts to reason, and live forever in the bare sensation of the moment. Unless we admit the fact of knowledge in the case of memory, our whole world goes to pieces; and if we do admit it, then we have no right to deny the precisely similar claim of sense perception, without a very positive reason for our denial.

If we look at the conclusion which has just been stated, we shall see that it has a further implication which is of very great importance. Such a resemblance as is called for, between our experience and reality, is only possible under one condition. We can know an experience of our own for the reason that it is a *conscious* experience, similar

in so far to the second experience which knows it. So, also, the process which we have supposed takes place in perception will not be possible, unless the object, the external thing, is also essentially of the nature of consciousness, similar in kind to the experience by which it is known. But while this is a very important consideration in its place, there is no need just here to dwell upon it. The arguments of agnosticism are based upon the *process* involved in knowing, the mechanism of the act, and it is on this ground that its objections must be met. And we are now perhaps in a condition to point out where the agnostic's reasoning fails to be conclusive. If we look again at the argument of Kant, we see that it is based upon the supposition that there are two distinct sources in knowledge, sense and understanding, which must coöperate before knowledge takes place; and that therefore understanding by itself does

not take us into the noumenal world. And *because* the abstract understanding by itself tells us nothing of reality, therefore there is no possible way in which such knowledge can be got. While, that is, Kant succeeds in showing that the rationalist's attempt to get reality out of mere abstract thought is a failure, he still retains the rationalistic assumption, that if we *could* get reality, abstract thought of some sort after all would be the only way; and so he imagines a thought which should be immediate, and not require that material be given it to work upon. Now in this position of Kant's there are two separate things which need to be distinguished. Kant, to repeat, had been accustomed to regard a process of abstract thinking as the only path by which we can arrive at a knowledge of noumenal reality, and since, as he pointed out, such thought, for us, always implies sensation, we cannot try to make thought work by itself

and still expect to get valid results. But now this argument, which concerns the method of reaching reality, carries also, as Kant uses it, an assumption with it as to the nature of the reality about which we are trying to obtain a knowledge, and this assumption is, that in ultimate reality the sense element must of necessity be lacking. Not only does Kant hold that thought is unable to lead us to reality, but the ultimate reason for this failure depends, for him, upon the supposed impossibility that the sense experience to which thought contributes an element should in any way resemble the real. Suppose we admit, with Kant, that thought by itself is insufficient, but maintain, as the whole spirit of his argument requires, that, when we try to take it by itself, thought is purely an abstraction, and that the only reality is the concrete experience, within which sense data and thought are mutually involved phases; why might not this concrete

experience truly represent the nature of ultimate reality, even though that which is only an abstracted element from experience failed to do so? Such a question, we see, gets no answer from Kant's direct argument, which was to the effect that human experience fails of being a true key to the nature of reality, because it is due to the necessary union of thought with sense; the question now is, why this very union may not be a type of noumenal existence, why the real world may not correspond to that whole concrete experience which it takes both sense and thought to constitute. And Kant answers this question, not by an argument, but by an assumption — the assumption that our experience, which is cast in the form of space and time, must obviously be purely subjective, subjective in the sense that it must be utterly unlike that which it professes to represent. But this is after all not obvious; it requires to be proved. If, indeed, it were meant simply to deny that

space and time are things by themselves, *within* which the absolute reality exists, as our bodies exist in space and are limited by it, we might consider that Kant has sufficiently proved his point. But the real thing that he would need to deny is this, that noumenal reality may conceivably be a self-conscious experience similar to the experience which constitutes our own lives, and that between the elements of this experience there may be certain real relations which correspond to spatial and temporal relations; and this is not a conception which is on the face of it impossible, though no doubt it leaves genuine metaphysical difficulties still to be solved. But they are difficulties to which, again, our experience affords at least a clew. If I take my own experience, it is, as Kant himself pointed out, even as a temporal experience, in some sense also out of and above time, since the conscious unity which is present through it all, and without which it could not exist, is no mem-

ber of the temporal series, but something which makes the very conception of time possible. And if my self can express itself in what from another point of view appears as an experience in time, without becoming a part of this temporal series, or being limited by it, we cannot deny the same possibility to the Absolute. It is, therefore, only an assumption on Kant's part, which he really does not undertake to prove, that ultimate reality must of necessity be quite unlike what we know as human life. And if this is granted, it has already been seen how it is possible to obviate the force of his more explicit argument. Experience, for us, is not a thing made up of two distinct parts, a set of abstract forms, and a formless material given to them to work upon. If, as Kant declared, experience is impossible without both thought and sense, then by themselves thought and sense are mere abstractions, and never existed, or could exist, apart. The reality is the concrete

sensuous experience, which, as it is a conscious unity, must from the start be bound together by what we afterwards recognize as thought relations, and not be made up simply of a lot of sensations; and the distinction between sense and thought, therefore, as an explicit distinction in experience, is not a metaphysical but a psychological one, and must be explained by showing what part the given element and the conceptual element play in the one experience of which they are — not component factors, but related phases. And we no longer have any need to hold that it is the function of the thought element, working by itself, to reveal to us the existence of a reality beyond our experience, because we have already discovered that this knowledge, as a matter of fact, comes to us in a much more direct way. We may still find ourselves able to retain those things-in-themselves which proved so unmanageable for Kant, by dropping the notion altogether that their

existence has to be established for us by a process of thought, and by recognizing that the knowledge of them is an original datum, which is given in the immediate claim on the part of certain concrete sections of our experience to stand for realities other than themselves, and which is already presupposed in every act of thinking. In an act of thought or judgment, such as "This rose is red," we have the subject "this rose," which already, even before the judgment is passed, carries with it the reference to external reality. "This rose" represents a certain part of my experience, constituted, for me, by previous acts of judgment, and so involving both the elements of thought and sense, which is *used* to stand for a reality, the actual rose; and when the judgment is completed, there is still this same external reference, only enlarged now from "rose" to "red rose." In addition, therefore, to the act of thinking, and presupposed by it both at the beginning and the end, not

in any sense a mere result from it, is this fact of *meaning* something which is not present in the experience itself, and which is not abstract like the thought element, but concrete, as the whole experience is; and it is upon this that the possibility of knowledge is based.

The criticism of scientific agnosticism must take a somewhat different line. Again we may ask, without trying for the moment to establish any positive theory, what impossibility there is in the way of supposing that ultimate reality is of a nature which can be approximately represented in terms of sensuous experience, in case we find any reasons for such a belief. The scientific agnostic cannot answer, as he might well be inclined to do, that sensuous experience is no true picture of the real world, for the reason that this world, as science conceives of it, in terms of molecules in motion, is altogether different from sensations; we cannot say that we know

the world is of a particular molecular construction, without giving up the contention that it is unknowable. And yet many of the arguments on which the agnostic relies do, in reality, come precisely to this. We are in general so ready to admit that our knowledge fails of attaining to the real, because we have so much practical experience of the uncertainty which is apt to attend it, of the fluctuations which sense perception undergoes, and the comparatively slight changes in the physical world which are sufficient to alter the entire complexion of our conscious life. But such an argument all the time presupposes that we know the inadequacy of passing phases of experience, only because we can set over against them a truer reality to compare them with, and a reality which, therefore, we know to be adequate. We say that our sensations fail to give us a true account of the world, because we have in mind that real and objective order which

furnishes a standard which our sensations do not succeed in meeting. But apart from this, there is also a rather vaguely defined notion, on which the agnostic relies, that consciousness is itself a sort of product, in which the factors that represent reality in its more original form are inseparably blended; and that therefore we can only know this product, and not the factors in their separate and more real existence. This is sometimes confusedly put in the form of a statement that consciousness involves both a subject that knows, and an object that is known, and that the object by itself, accordingly, cannot be the same as it is when thus brought into relation with a subject, since the relation changes it. But when we ask exactly what this statement means, we shall find that it can be reduced to the very commonplace admission that, if I am going to know anything, it has got to be known *by me*, and so by a subject; and such a "relation" tells abso-

lutely nothing about the knowability of objects, unless it is based on the original assumption, which is a pure assumption, that the nature of objects is utterly unlike conscious experience, and therefore cannot be reproduced in terms of consciousness without being falsified. It is true that the argument is valid so long as we have in mind by an object a so-called material thing, whose sole characteristic is that it is not consciousness; but then we have an argument against materialism, and not against the possibility of knowledge in general.

There is, however, another fact which perhaps more often the scientist has in mind in speaking of the relativity of knowledge, and that is the dependence of consciousness upon the sense organs. Consciousness, it is said, cannot tell us about the real world, because it is a secondary product, which results only on the occasion of a reaction between the object and the bodily structure. Here,

again, we imply, as was said before, a degree of knowledge about the physical object, and the physiological processes, which is fatal to agnosticism; but we may pass this by, and consider simply the argument that is involved in the word "product." The force of the argument seems to depend on either one of two things. On the one hand, the thought may be that two factors, which have a separate existence, combine to form a product distinct in nature from themselves, in which, however, they lose themselves completely, as oxygen and hydrogen may be supposed to disappear in order to give place to water. But in that case, since it only is the product which we, as conscious beings, can have to base our knowledge on, there would be no reason for our thinking that there were such things as separate factors at all. If water could be imagined conscious, it could never suspect the existence of oxygen and hydrogen, because for the wholly different

properties of oxygen and hydrogen to exist, water would have to disappear. In reality, however, this cannot be what the scientific agnostic means, for he supposes that the factors of which he speaks do not disappear in the conscious product, but that this product is something additional, which exists alongside and beyond them. Therefore his argument would seem to turn rather on this idea, that the action of an object in coöperation with the physiological processes of the organism cannot, just for the reason that there is this coöperation, produce a conscious product which shall represent the object by itself. But, after all, what is the basis of this supposed impossibility? Is not the fact that such a mutual interaction ***in the physical world*** must produce a ***physical*** result unlike either of the coöperating causes, the sole fact that the agnostic can bring forward to substantiate his contention? Now in the scientific explanation of sensation we find certain vibrations

outside the body, and then a series of molecular changes in the brain which these give rise to; and the latter do differ from the former because they have first been mediated by the peculiar construction of the sense organs. But taken strictly, this is only a doctrine of brain movements, and not of conscious facts at all, and unless we identify sensations with nervous changes in the brain, it tells us nothing of the former. But the conscious fact is not the brain motion, and does not resemble it in the slightest; since, therefore, it lies outside the realm of facts to which our scientific statements apply, we have absolutely no *a priori* reason for saying that because, in the physical world, the brain movement cannot resemble that which makes up only a part of the conditions that are necessary to produce it, therefore the non-physical fact of consciousness may not represent the reality which, indeed, is what ultimately gives rise to it, but which is its cause in

quite another sense from that in which one physical process is the cause of another. We cannot make such a statement, that is, unless we assume to start with that reality is unrepresentable in consciousness, or unless, again, we go back to the position that sensational experience is untrue, because it is different from that truer reality of molecules in motion, which science tells us of: and then we have ceased to be agnostics.

THEISTIC IDEALISM

THEISTIC IDEALISM

WE have traced in the preceding chapters the attempts on the part of philosophy to discover some conception which should be adequate to the nature of reality as a whole. The first tendency, we found, was to make the conception a very abstract one; the concrete facts of experience were set aside in order to get at some peculiarly real essence of reality behind them. But this attempt had to pay the penalty of failing to explain the things which thus had been ignored, and which yet were the very things to explain which philosophy had been called into existence. A more definite conception, therefore, had

to be attained, and it soon became evident that the only category which stood any chance of meeting the requirements, was the category of conscious life. Berkeley and Hegel alike were agreed in this, that the effort to get a notion of what anything can be outside of consciousness is doomed to failure in advance. Conscious experience is the only reality we know, or possibly can know, and unless it represents reality truly, we must confess that we have no idea at all of what ultimate reality is like. Of course this last alternative always remains open; perhaps we do not know what ultimate reality is like: but if this be true, it is not a conclusion which we can prove dogmatically, but only remains as a possible alternative, after our failure to arrive at any more positive result. As a reasoned demonstration of the impossibility of knowledge, agnosticism cannot maintain itself; at best it is only a confession of our intellectual defeat. It al-

ways leaves the door open, therefore, for a new attempt, and if we still have confidence to make the trial, then, once more, it is the verdict of philosophy that in idealism of some sort and fashion, and in idealism alone, is there any hope of finding a solution whose failure is not a foregone conclusion. In the present chapter, then, the effort will be made to arrive at some positive theory, which shall avoid the difficulties which the previous arguments have made us familiar with; while there will also be occasion to differentiate this from certain other types of theory, which likewise may be termed idealistic.

The essential feature of an idealistic philosophy consists in this, that the ultimate reality which constitutes the universe is conceived after the analogy, at least, of a conscious life. There are, of course, difficulties which such a theory has to meet, and these may be considered in connection with two main problems:

the relation in which this conscious reality stands to the material world, and the relation which it bears to ourselves as conscious beings.

In examining into the nature of knowledge, we have already been led to a definite theory about what we know as material existence. Our common-sense belief is, without doubt, that the things which we perceive in the external world exist quite independent of our consciousness, and exist, too, in very much the way they are perceived. Berkeley's notion that we can reduce the world to mere sensations of our own is altogether foreign to our natural thought. Yet, on the other hand, we found it quite impossible to give to objects an existence by themselves, apart from consciousness, and still retain the slightest comprehension of what they can be like. But why should we not cease trying to think of objects as separate realities? why should their existence not be an existence within con-

sciousness, where alone they are conceivable, but in a consciousness more ultimate than ours, a world consciousness? In this way we could maintain at once their separate reality and their knowableness. Let us recall again the previous treatment of the problem of knowledge. We found that the condition which seems to be demanded by the fact of knowledge is this, that a sensational element in our experience should have the power to stand for something similar to it in reality at large. We cannot give up knowledge without divorcing our philosophical theories from all those practical beliefs which are essential to our active life; if, then, we are to justify it, we must suppose that ultimate existence is of a nature which resembles, in some degree, our own conscious life, and that what we call objects, therefore, are, when looked at truly, no more than elements in this absolute consciousness. The world is not, as Berkeley supposed, unreal, and reduci-

ble to our own sensations; these sensations really stand, as they claim to do, for a reality beyond, and science, therefore, has its justification. But neither is the world an incomprehensible world of matter divorced from spirit; it exists only as it forms the framework, as it were, of God's conscious life, and so it has no need to be distinguished from God, or related to him, as if it were somehow a separate thing.

Understood in this way, we have an answer to those problems which we were unable to solve in the earlier chapters. How are we to get a unity into the world which shall be more than an abstract unity, and which shall take up the differences as an essential element within itself? Not by looking behind things for an underlying, static substance, but by taking the whole dynamic process which it requires just this manifold of different elements to constitute, and which, again, we can understand as a unity only by

looking to our own active and purposive lives. The world can be a unity only if it is, like human life, a unity of conscious end. It is this conception of an end, which rules in the complexity of the conscious life, needing the manifold of elements in order to express itself, and yet binding them all together into what we feel directly as a whole, without which the parts would have no existence, which alone shows how it is conceivable that things should be brought into connection, without at the same time losing their distinction. The unity of the world cannot be understood except as the unity of purpose, which is carried out, not in spite of, but by means of differences; and such a purpose has no existence outside of conscious life.

So, too, if we wish to understand more in detail how a so-called individual object is related to this comprehensive experience, we have, again, to consider what an object is to us. Let us take any ob-

ject which enters into human activities, the brush, say, which the artist uses in his work. There are certain sensations which the brush gives rise to, but we do not consider that the essence of the brush consists in these; we define the object rather by the use to which it is put. The sensations, it is true, are present in some degree even when the artist is actively at work with his painting, they form part of that sensational content which is needed to make the experience concrete and actual; but what we really mean by the brush is defined by the purpose which it serves. Even when we think of it as a perfectly dead and unchanging "thing," this fixed content that we have in mind in reality refers back all the while to the activities where the brush comes into play. So, too, the "real" existence of any external object, as a tree for instance, we may conceive to be the part which this plays in that intelligent, purposive life which makes

up the Absolute. In this life, also, there is what we still may call the sensational content, although, of course, this no longer stands for something distinct from itself, as our sensations do; and this content to some extent is copied in the sensations which I get in looking at the tree: but here, again, the sensational element only exists as it is used in a teleological way, and the real thing is the purpose or the meaning. We must, however, notice that we actually recognize anything as a separate object only when, for the moment, we cease to use it. While the artist is at work, he does not stop to think of his brush explicitly as a brush, but it enters simply as an element into the whole unitary consciousness of the experience he is undergoing. An object stands out separately, as an object, only as it ceases for the time being to be actively used, and, instead, is thought about; and we do not stop to think, unless we meet some difficulty

which interferes with what we are doing. If the brush refuses to work well any longer, then the artist stops his painting and begins to examine the brush itself as an individual object. Our normal attitude, in other words, is not thinking about things, but doing them; thinking is a mere instrument, which ultimately must issue in action, and which has for its function the getting rid of difficulties which have brought our activity to a standstill. And it is, again, only as they are thought about, not as they enter into active life, that objects seem to possess for us that separateness of existence which we commonly have in mind in the notion of objects. This has, therefore, to be remembered when we try to interpret the real nature of the external world. Our own life is made up of concrete experience, and it is immediately open to us as a whole, and so we are under less temptation to think of it in terms of its component parts; but the

ultimate reality of the absolute experience we are able to get at only indirectly, through the perception of individual objects, which we then proceed to build together into a world. And it consequently seems to us as if the problem were to introduce, in a secondary way, a connection between objects which first of all are separate. But now we are able to recognize that it only is the limitations belonging to our way of approach to a knowledge of the world, which gives rise to such an assumption. Our own life is experienced as a unity to begin with, and so the same difficulty is not present there; but God's life we do not thus experience, but only come to know it piecemeal, through perception or thought. This collection of fragments, however, is not the reality; the reality is the unitary conscious life, within which objects are not felt at all as separate, any more than the brush is felt as separate when the artist uses it in paint-

ing. Reality, in other words, is not the static existence which we take it to be for the purposes of thought, but it is a conscious activity; objects have no existence, really, except as they enter into such a dynamic process.

In the same way we shall have also a key to the solution of that problem of causation which, especially since the time of Hume, has occupied so large a place in philosophical discussions. We have seen how hard it is to conceive of a connecting link between events, and yet common sense decidedly objects to Hume's conclusion, that the mere following of one event upon another in time will exhaust all that we mean by causation. Evidently we mean to express more than this when we use the word; we mean that one event somehow depends upon another. And in the conception of reality as a conscious life, the expression of a rational purpose, we have the only clew to what such a con-

nection can be like. Two events will have an intelligible bond between them, if they both are elements in the working out of a conscious end: one will condition the other, not through its own power as a separate thing, but as one step in a process conditions the next step, through the controlling influence of a purpose, which only can carry itself out by the intelligent selection of means which mutually implicate one another. Again we come back to the recognition that, to understand the possibility of a unity of things, we must presuppose this unity at the start, and can never build it up by adding separate things together; and the only unity we can understand is the unity of end or purpose, in which the parts are related to each other as those steps which are mutually involved in carrying the purpose out. What we call power, then, or force, is not an external something operating between separate objects; it stands for the re-

storing of that element of activity, of the fact of belonging originally to a unitary process, which for the time had been ignored. Force, in other words, when translated into conscious terms, is will; but by will, again, we shall not mean a special power which enters into our life at particular points in order to direct it. Our whole life is a life of action, of movement, and this movement is what we mean by will; it is not something which interferes in the conscious life, but that whole life, as an activity, is its expression.

It seems to be possible, then, to get an intelligible notion of what the nature of the outer world may be, by applying to it that concept of a conscious life, of which we find the possibility in our own experience. But we have not yet got reality completely defined. What we know simply as nature cannot be the whole of such a consciousness, any more than we can state our own life in

terms of the framework of objective facts which enters into it, to the exclusion of the side of meaning, of emotional appreciation and spiritual significance. We cannot conceive of reality in purely natural terms because, in the first place, it is an activity, and an activity involves an end, which goes beyond anything in the way of mere natural phenomena; and, in the second place, the natural world does not take in our own conscious lives, and the facts of social development, which yet form a very essential part of the universe. We may try to make our conception of reality more definite, then, by considering it in connection with this problem of the relation which the ultimate reality bears to finite selves.

We shall have to assume at the start that what we call a self cannot possibly be understood in isolation, but must be regarded, like everything else, as a part of the whole universe, in which it has a

certain place, and performs a certain function. But there are two general directions in which the nature of this connection of the self with the universe may be looked for. We may hold that it enters into the world self as part of a continuous consciousness, as a sensation is a part of my conscious life; or we may accept the apparent separateness of the world from the life of individuals, and may try to conceive of the unity in a way which shall not be incompatible with a relative independence. The latter is the attitude of theism, as the former is of pantheism.

The ground for this difference in conception goes back largely to a difference which has already been suggested, but which needs to be brought out more distinctly — the difference between the idea of reality as a passive state of consciousness, and as an activity, reality as thought, and as active will. The tendency in philosophy has always been

to represent the Absolute, after the analogy of abstract thought, as a kind of static existence. When I think about any particular reality, I assume that it is not changing in the meanwhile, or else I should be meaning something different each successive moment, or rather I should never know what I really did mean. The ideal for thought, that is, is to grasp reality in a single pulse of consciousness, within which each element shall take its proper place, and the whole form a complete and absolutely exhaustive system. Taking reality as such a timeless conscious whole, a whole of knowledge, it is hardly possible to see how any finite life can come into a unity with it, except as it forms directly one of its component parts. If reality is a fact complete once for all, anything existing in any sense apart from it would seem to have no excuse for being.

A theory of this sort is open, however, to several objections. The gist of the

conception, once more, amounts to this. There is a certain fact, my conscious life, which seems to be a somewhat limited affair, but this apparent limitation is in reality an illusion. Beyond my life there stretches, without break, a wider life, which has the same consciousness that I have, but much more besides; and the perplexities and contradictions of life, for me, are only the result of this limitation, while for a more inclusive consciousness they are reduced to harmony. But now the implication of this would seem to be, that the notion we can get of reality is so infinitely removed from the final truth, that it is hard to make the difference between what for us seems truth, and error, a very vital matter. Falsehood is only limitation; everything is true, but it may not be the whole truth; and it only can grow truer as the circle of its existence widens to take in a constantly increasing area of reality. But then the truth of any state of conscious-

ness is measured directly, so to speak, by the amount of room it takes up in the total sum of the universe. We cannot speak of all reality being present ideally in each particular fact; it may be true that an absolute vision could see such implications in it, but for its own consciousness each fact is only the part which it seems to be, and is more or less true according as it is a greater or a smaller part. And when we think how infinitely small a part of the universe any conscious life makes up, we have to face the suspicion that completer reality may, and in all likelihood does, so overwhelm the little piece of truth that we have got, as to make it practically unrecognizable. Between the worst of human error, and its highest truth, there must be a vastly smaller gulf than between this latter and the all-inclusive unity; and if the possession of perfect knowledge is the goal of living, as on this theory it would seem to

be, the effort, in the face of such pitiful results, hardly seems worth the while. If this conclusion seems not altogether certain, there is another difficulty which is perhaps more obvious. Nothing can have the least pretensions to reality, on such a theory, which does not enter into the all-embracing consciousness of God. But is it possible to hold to this, and still admit the apparent limitation of human life? There cannot be the slightest doubt that our experience seems to us, truly enough, to be a limited one; but how is it possible to conceive of such a limitation in God's life? If the barriers are all taken away for him, how does the limit in any sense still remain? It may be said that, as the sense of the limit is a fact for us, so also it will enter, as something which he knows, into God's consciousness, although he does not feel it as a limitation. And it is pointed out that a belief which at one time may for us be final, can, as a result of subse-

quent experience, take its place within a larger unity, which, while it recognizes the partial truth of this belief, transforms it by means of a completer knowledge. But that whole conscious state which the former belief represents is not transferred bodily into the later experience; on the contrary, we recognize that our present state is altogether different from the other one, and that the two can exist only as experiences distinct in time, and not together. With our former belief there went a certain tone of feeling, an emotional tinge, — the feeling, it may be, of despair; that feeling now is gone, and there only remains a knowledge of it, as of something in the past. So also if we grant that our sense of limitation enters into God's knowledge, we are by that very fact making it an altogether different thing, for God, from what it is for us. God may know it, but he cannot *feel* it as we do. For us it permeates and gives color to our entire

conscious life, and this is something that it cannot do for God, unless he too is limited. If, then, the feeling of limitation is a fact, it is a fact which cannot exist within the life of God. The very insistence upon the transformation which our experience undergoes in the consciousness of God, is a direct admission that it is not our experience which exists there; it cannot be the same if it has been transformed. The whole theory is based upon the fallacy of supposing that a conscious fact is a hard and fast thing, which can enter into all sorts of combinations, and still remain unaltered. The truth is that the being of a conscious fact is constituted very largely by its setting. Even the sensation which I get from an object is not just the same sensation before and after I begin to attend explicitly to it; the sensation is changed by its altered relationships. It is impossible, then, to say that my conscious life enters into a larger

consciousness, except by confusing my experience as *I feel it*, with a *knowledge* of this experience on the part of God. But, as we have seen, a knowledge of anything never is the thing itself, but always implies the separate existence of what is known. So that it does not seem to be possible to merge finite experience in a universal experience, and leave it with no separate existence of its own; if it really were part of such a wider experience, the illusion of finiteness and limitation would not exist.

We have seen that the theory is based upon the conception of reality as a state of knowledge, and of perfect reality as a complete state of knowledge, in which everything has its place as an element. At best this makes human achievement a wholly negative thing, the mere question of a trifle more or less of error, which, however, can never be wholly overcome. And since truth already exists perfect and complete, it seems a useless trouble thus

to multiply imperfect copies of itself. Nor is it very clear that a mere state of knowledge, as a timeless act, gives after all the unity to life which philosophy is in search of. It is the business of thought to hold things apart, to distinguish, and we have found how difficult it is, when once things are separated, ever to get them together again. The only unity we have been able to discover is the unity of end or purpose; but purpose involves activity, and activity seems to have no place in a world of unchanging truth, complete from the beginning.

To turn, then, to the second alternative, if we accept the results of the previous chapters, and look at ultimate reality, not as it is for abstract thought, but as a movement, which, indeed, we can think of, but which can never actually be present in any thought experience, but only known by it, we may perhaps be able to gain a conception of the unity of the world which at least will not be open to the foregoing

objections, and which will admit the amount of separateness on the part of individual selves which common sense demands, without making them separate absolutely. If we look for that which forms the essence of our own conscious lives, we shall find that it consists in working actively for a social end. Our life is what we *do*, consciously realized; and this doing involves of necessity the world and other selves. I am born into a social world, just as I am born into a physical world, and a life that should be purely individual, that did not act continually with reference to its social environment, would be an unthinkable abstraction. We have our unity, therefore, in that common end which binds all actions together, and which each self may consciously appreciate; and yet that does not prevent the individual from having his own life, which others realize in its effects and its relationships, but which no one but himself can immediately experience. Every act is an

act in a common world, which has innumerable consequences for every other being, and which, in its place, is an essential act, without which the world could not be what it is. And the conscious appreciation of those acts which we call ours, is what makes up our conscious lives. In so far as the act is overt, what we call a physical act, it literally changes the whole world, and through its results it is known by, and influences, others than ourselves. But our *conscious appreciation* of the act and its results — and this, as we shall see, determines the act to be what it is — is ours alone. Because the act *really* has these social results, and because we can know them, and intend them to work, as they do, for a common end, the world is a unity, and each act of our lives has the value which comes from being an essential step in the world's progress; but because, also, our immediate consciousness of the act is, as a direct sensational experience, a thing which no one but ourselves can

have, our life has a certain separateness from all the rest of the universe, although it never would exist unless it were a consciousness which, through the medium of its physical expression, formed an essential element in the meaning of this world beyond it. If, then, we transfer this to the absolute experience, the highest conception we can get of the world is the conception of a social whole, within which God represents that ultimate self upon which all the rest depend. In this way we perhaps may get some notion of how it should be possible that God can have a conscious life distinct from ours, and yet including it. As soon as we speak of God as another self, we are met at once with the objection that this limits God, because it makes him less than the whole; while, on the other hand, our own reality is endangered, if we are put outside of God. But after all it is not clear why the concept of creative power, working in accordance with a conscious purpose, should not

furnish all the unity we need. Why should we not suppose that the nature of the Absolute self is, like ours, essentially a social nature, and that his life is a conscious life of active coöperation in a social world with finite selves, whom he himself brings into being? In this way each self may have its own inviolable selfhood of immediate experience, which no one but itself can *be*, and which all others, God included, can only know, while yet we do not need to take the self as an original and inexplicable bit of existence quite independent of God. Ultimately it has no real independence, since it comes into being through the power of God and with reference to his purposes, while its every act enters into the meaning of God's life, which itself is constituted by those social relationships whose development forms the truth of history. Unless we are ready to deny outright that God can have the power to grant to individual selves the enjoyment of a life from which, as immediate feeling,

though not in the form of knowledge, he excludes even himself, there does not seem to be any difficulty in the way of such a theory which is insuperable, and it has the advantage of giving to that concept of social life, which modern thought is tending more and more to come back to as its final word, a basis in the inmost and essential reality of the world.

There has already been implied in this a certain conception of what the nature of a self consists in. Hume was not able to find the self, and naturally so, for the reason that he looked for it in some particular element of consciousness, whereas it is the conscious life in its entirety, taken, however, not as a string of conscious states, but as an activity, as bound together in the unity of a conscious purpose. The real essence of selfhood is this: the consciousness of an active experience, in which each step is bound together with every other by its relation to an inclusive end, which

is immediately realized in every part. Self-consciousness, therefore, does not mean an occupation with oneself to the exclusion of everything else; while the act is the act of the self, it is also an act with numberless relationships, which constitute its meaning, and which, as such, are consciously realized. The self is social in its very nature. This immediate experience has value only as it is felt to enter into the larger unity of the world. True self-consciousness is a consciousness of the value of the act which makes up the self, in terms, however, of the social whole into which the act enters as an element. While, however, this definition will serve in a general way, there seems after all to be something in the conception of a *finite* self which it fails to cover. If our conscious life were, not a partial, but a perfect whole, if a single purpose ruled it consciously from first to last, which we felt summed up our entire nature, and

so if our whole being were consciously expressed in each successive moment of experience, then the mere statement of our *conscious* life would adequately state the self. And something of this nature we may suppose the ultimate self to be. But our own lives are far more dependent and more fragmentary than this comes to, and we can hardly avoid feeling that there is some justification for the old idea of a substance or soul which lies back of, and furnishes the foundation for, our clearly conscious self. Any act that we perform seems to us to express only a part of ourselves; back of it there are all those latent habits which make up our "character," all the realm of the unconscious; and what are we to say of what we call the tendencies of our nature, the hidden impulses and dispositions whose existence we never surmise till some occasion calls them forth, and we suddenly wake up to find ourselves such persons as we

never had suspected? We have no need to dispute the facts, but what they stand for is simply this, that the roots of our being lie far deeper in reality than any explicit consciousness of ours. We do not need, however, to take the "soul" as something mysterious and unknown; we have a very tangible reality at hand already in the human body, where science long ago found the explanation of just these facts we are trying to account for. But this does not mean that the foundation of the self is matter; we must interpret it in accordance with our conclusion as to what the reality of matter is. For the body represents only a certain element in the conscious life of the Absolute — the point of connection between the independent reality of our own conscious existence, and the rest of the universe. It represents the capital which is given us to start with, a capital which, as evolution shows, sums up a long line of

achievement in the past, and connects us with the history of the whole world. Our *conscious* self, the true moral and responsible self, the self as the whole of an experience which is consciously realized, represents the use which is made of this capital. It is because our conscious life comes back constantly to the organic body, and is based from beginning to end upon the activities of that life process which, again, is only an element in the larger process of the world, that it never can be merely individual, but must always be the consciousness of a life which is dependent and related. But each conscious act not only grows out of bodily conditions, but in turn it modifies these conditions; it registers itself in the body, and, through that, by means of the bodily activities, in reality as a whole. In the structure of the body our whole past achievement lies summed up, ready to assert itself when the occasion comes. That more

fundamental self, then, which lies behind the passing conscious expression, is in reality the whole sum of our original capital and of the modifications in it which our life experience has produced, indelibly imprinted in what we call the material world, but which is actually the life of God.

In addition to the problems which have thus been briefly noticed, there is one other fundamental difficulty which has come into a special prominence in connection with the results of scientific theory. It is a difficulty which has been spoken of already. Our conscious life is something which exists beyond those physical facts which science deals with, and apparently it does not come under the same laws with them. Every fact in the world of matter science tries to account for on purely physical grounds, as due to previous physical conditions; and so consciousness would seem to be a mere impertinence when it comes to

explaining an event in the outer world, and it would not appear to have the power of exerting any influence whatever, without breaking into the scientific formulæ. It has, accordingly, become a widely accepted theory, that physical facts, represented in the movements of the brain, and conscious facts, go along, indeed, parallel to each other, but without any causal relationship between them. Consciousness is a mere epiphenomenon, a bare added fact, which has no significance in determining what the course of physical events shall be.

In so far as such a theory supposes that matter is the reality of which mind is only an unnecessary adjunct, or, again, as with Spinoza, that mind and matter are equally real aspects or sides of a single ultimate existence, it already has been sufficiently criticised. It is impossible to keep matter and consciousness thus on an equality, since, as we have seen, the former is known only in conscious

terms. The very phrase "sides or aspects" has no meaning except as we postulate a consciousness within which they appear as aspects, and so consciousness gets at once the upper hand. There is, however, still another possible conception which avoids this epistemological difficulty. We may grant, that is, the idealistic result that consciousness is the sole reality, and maintain that the material world is only the phenomenal aspect of what in its real nature is a conscious existence. That particular bit of reality which makes up my own life I experience immediately as consciousness, but all other reality I know only indirectly, and it appears to me phenomenally in terms of matter. But I can infer the nature of the reality behind these phenomena, because I know one section of it already in my own conscious life.

The advantage of the theory lies in this, that it enables us to admit the scientific demand that consciousness should not

come in to interfere with physical laws, and still does not compel us to thrust consciousness aside as a nonentity in the universe. Consciousness does not interfere with matter, because matter *is* consciousness; there is no second thing to come in from the outside. Another person looking at me sees a body and a nervous system, acting in accordance with certain laws; my consciousness does not influence these laws as a foreign fact, because the reality of what another person sees as a nervous change *is* my consciousness. What I experience directly as a conscious fact appears to an observer phenomenally as a brain movement, and physical laws are but the phenomenal side of conscious laws. Just as my brain, accordingly, represents my conscious life, so every physical fact is, we may suppose, in reality a conscious fact; and as each physical phenomenon enters into a larger combination with other phenomena to form at last the universe, a great whole

bound together by universal laws, so the realities for which these phenomena stand enter into more and more comprehensive combinations, till they finally make up the universal consciousness of God.

We have already had occasion to notice some of the difficulties which a theory like this suggests. It has just been seen that the conception of individual selves as entering directly into a universal consciousness is not a satisfactory one. Then, too, the theory fails entirely to meet those requirements which were brought out in analyzing knowledge. It is not clear how we can get to a knowledge that anything exists at all beyond our own bit of consciousness; and since at best we can know it, in detail, only as it is *not*, we do not seem to be very far advanced. And one other consideration now may be added to these. That which I call my brain is, in reality, my conscious life, and of this conscious life it is clear that the mathematical relationships which science

finds in my brain movements form no part whatsoever. Since, then, this particular bit of reality *is* only what it is for consciousness, the relationships of science are not present in it; they are phenomena, and only exist for another mind. But now for complete reality, or God, there can be no appearance, but things are seen only as they are; phenomenal existence is only possible to that which is a part of reality, and for which there is another part outside itself which can appear to it. So that the conclusion seems to be that the facts of science have no existence for the ultimate reality, or God. If God were really conscious of that framework of the world which science constructs, I also, it would seem, ought to be immediately conscious of the particular part of this which corresponds to the section of reality which I make up, since there is no more to this section of reality than I am conscious of. While, then, the theory is originated to meet the

demands of scientific method, it fails after all to furnish any sufficient basis for science to rest upon.

We may still ask, therefore, whether it may not be possible to justify the demand of science that everything should be explained in terms of mechanism or natural law, with which no outside influence is to be permitted in any way to interfere, on the theory which has already been suggested in the present chapter. The question evidently at bottom is that of the relation of mechanism to teleology, and in order to answer it we must consider more carefully what is really implied in these two concepts. And we shall find that the trouble has been caused by taking mechanism as if it stood for a final explanation, whereas it only tells us about the *how* of a thing, the way in which, not the reason for which, it is done. There is, consequently, no inherent contradiction between mechanism and teleology, if we drop the idea

that the latter is a special force, which some things can be explained without, but which needs occasionally to be invoked as a superior and supernatural influence. Mechanism will not exclude teleology, if only we admit that a purposive act does not have necessarily to be a lawless act, but may show in its working a perfectly definite law or mechanism. Mechanism, once more, simply denotes the relationships which are expressed in how a thing is done, and it makes no difference to it that the doing should all the while be working out an intelligent end. The notion that it does make a difference depends upon a conception of reality which already has been found untenable — the notion that the essence of reality is in the parts of which it is composed, and not in the whole. So we take a number of individual atoms, and suppose that each, with its own separate motion, is the original fact, and then that they combine mechanically to form cer-

tain secondary products. But actually the motion of each atom is what it is only as it forms a part of the whole world. It has no existence by itself, but only as the one universe has a particular expression in it. And this world, again, we have seen can be conceived as a unity only as it is a unity of conscious purpose. Teleology, therefore, comes first, the unity of the purposive life of God. But that purposive life does not move at haphazard, but in accordance with law, with order, with regularity. Between the different elements in it which, in coming to know the world, we distinguish, there are relationships which we represent in terms of mathematically exact laws. These laws show how reality acts, and enable us to forecast and govern the processes of nature; why they act in this way is not a problem for science, but for philosophy and life. Conceivably all natural processes might be reduced to a single formula, but that would make real-

ity no whit less purposive. It is not a question between purpose and law, but between purpose and chance, and that the world is governed by chance, science itself is as much interested to disprove as philosophy. It is, indeed, all the more difficult, now that science, in the theory of evolution, has shown the unity of the world so clearly, to resist the impression of purpose of some sort in the long stretch of material development and of social growth. Reality is not simply the swirl of nebulous mist with which the process starts, but it is the process as a whole; and if the issue has shown itself to be in some degree a harmonious and intelligible one, we have no right to take it as a mere chance result from given conditions, but rather we must take it as reality more adequately defined. But if this is true, then the ultimate statement of the world is not that mechanism of atoms and forces which science constructs in order to embody her laws; this,

which is only an inference from the living world which meets our senses, never can displace the more original data from which it is derived. If reality is a living experience, there is no reason why it should not possess for itself all the warmth and immediacy and richness which our own sensuous life possesses; the abstract world of science is the mere framework of this, which tells us in mathematical terms how it works, but which may easily turn our eyes away from its essential nature and meaning.

Since, then, natural laws are not the cause and presupposition of reality, but require themselves to be explained ultimately as the expression of a purposive life, our own conscious life may help determine these laws, without at all interfering with their regularity and scientific precision. My purpose does not direct the movement of my body by coming in to change the nature of laws already physically determined, but since my con-

scious life is an essential element in the meaning which constitutes God's life, and enters into his purpose as a part of it, it helps as such to determine what the laws of his working, which are revealed to us in that external world which includes our own bodies, are to be, without preventing these laws from being as regular and as mathematically exact as science demands. Our conscious life is part of the meaning which is the reality of the world, and which, therefore, determines, not as an afterthought, but in the first place, the laws of the world. Science has nothing to do but note what, as a matter of fact, the laws are, regardless of how they may have come to be, and consequently does not need to take into its account the world of meaning, to which the conscious lives of individuals, as distinct from their bodily actions, belong.

SCEPTICISM AND THE CRITERION OF TRUTH

SCEPTICISM AND THE CRITERION OF TRUTH

NO philosophical theory that has been or is ever likely to be propounded is, we may venture to say, self-evident, or fitted to carry conviction at once to every mind. There are certain tests to which it must submit, certain standards which it has to meet, in order that its validity may appear. These tests, however, are themselves a matter more or less of dispute. What is the sort of standard we are justified in demanding that philosophical truth should come up to? If we can answer this, and can settle just the measure of validity which our theory claims for itself, we may be in a position to guard

against certain objections which otherwise might prove formidable.

Scepticism is essentially a demand for the criterion of truth, and it frequently has assumed an importance in philosophy which seems very much out of proportion to the part which healthy doubt plays in our practical life. If in practical affairs we were to hesitate to act until we had absolute and demonstrative certainty, we never should begin to move at all; certain cases do indeed occur where a tendency like this is shown, but they are recognized at once as pathological. Action is our normal condition, and doubt is strictly subordinate to action; it does not mean a complete suspension of judgment, but only enough of it to make our action more effective. Why, then, should scepticism in philosophy so often depart from this, and stand out as a final attitude? It can be justified in doing so only on one particular assumption as to what the nature of truth in philosophy is. This

assumption separates philosophy from life in two ways. It assumes that philosophical truth is sufficiently removed from the business of living, to render it practicable for us to demand in this way a sort of proof which we have no time to wait for in other spheres; it makes it, in other words, a pure matter of theory, and not of practice at all. And it also divorces philosophy from the rest of life by making it the ideal of philosophy to sum up truth in a final and complete way, with no more possibility of growth, whereas life itself is essentially a development. But now it may be questioned whether such a conception of what truth consists in is not altogether a mistake.

Upon what is the possibility of logical proof based? We can easily enough see that it cannot be anything in the nature of an external connection, which can reach out and grip two separate propositions together. Once more we have to recognize that, in the logical no more

than in the physical realm, can the parts come first and the connection afterwards; we never can get a unity which is not a unity to start with. Proof, then, demands a whole within which there exists a certain interrelation of parts, of such a nature that they mutually imply one another. Suppose we take the logical process known as inference. A heap of shells is found in some place now uninhabited, and we infer that formerly human beings had encamped there. Do we simply pass from the particular fact of the shells to another isolated fact, the existence of a prehistoric group of savages? By no means; we might look at the shells forever, and if they furnished all our data, they would never carry us a step. If we are asked the proof of our inference, we find that we have really been postulating the known reality of savage life, in which both the savages on the one hand, and their habits of life and relationship to their food environment on the other, play a part; and

we can pass from one element of this to another, just because there is presupposed the unity which includes them both as related factors. So what in general I do when I try to prove any fact, is to get it inside a more comprehensive statement of reality, with whose other elements it is connected by such lines of relationship that, when they are admitted, it follows as the natural result; and the more lines of connection it can be shown to have with other admitted facts, the more solidly its own reality is considered established.

But now, if this represents the actual process of proof, it renders demonstration, in the strict sense, out of the question. In order to prove anything, we must always postulate some larger reality which is taken to require no proof; and so, if we go back far enough, the ultimate basis of logical demonstration is our experience as a whole, and all the facts of reality which it has brought us into contact with. Logical proof only applies to the connec-

tion of elements within this, and not to the fundamental datum itself; that has to be taken simply as something given to us in experience, which might have been different, but which, as a matter of fact, is what it is. The ideal, then, from this standpoint, would be a complete system intellectually stated, a system so articulated that each part would imply, and be implied by, all the rest. Consequently the test is consonancy with experience as a concrete whole, and not immediate certainty. We do not, in other words, go back along a line which constantly grows more abstract and meagre in content, until we reach certain very abstract truths, which themselves cannot be proved because they are immediately self-evident; but rather our direction is towards greater and greater inclusiveness and concreteness. The difference is a very considerable one. We can be logically certain only of the process of deduction, but in any case there must be a certain basis of fact

which is not proved, but assumed, in order that the deduction should be possible. If we take these postulates, on the one hand, as certain abstract truths, each one of these must stand solely on its own foundation. We may say, for example, that we cannot help believing the postulate, because we find it impossible to think its opposite. But then the sceptic may ask again, How do you know that reality must correspond to your thought? and to this it is difficult to give an answer. When, on the other hand, we fall back on experience as a whole, we have, again, to assume this as a fact, for which it is idle to ask for demonstrative proof. It is quite possible to conceive that reality should have been utterly different, and so we cannot say "must," but only "is." And yet we do not feel the same helplessness here that we did in the other case, for we have not an isolated dictum, but the whole of experience to rely on; and practically, if not theoretically, we

cannot ask for any more solid ground than this. If we can see that any fact is thoroughly consistent with all the other facts that we know, we have, in a practical way, no very good reason to complain.

Of course, in the example which has just been given, there not only is assumed the fact of savage life, but it also is taken for granted that we know enough about the relationships which savage life involves to detect in it certain general principles or laws, of which the particular instance is an application. These laws of connection within reality, which enable it to form a system, and which make possible our reasoning about the world, are not by any means self-evident, and a theory of logic would find an important part of its task in determining the processes by which we attempt to dissect the immediate and confused data of experience, and to simplify it sufficiently to discover the relationships

of its parts. It is not necessary to consider this problem in detail; we may point out, however, that such laws or general principles, also, imply just as truly the concrete whole of reality which experience presents, and which is itself not demonstrated, but only taken as it comes. The law of causation has no real existence, except as it is embodied in a world of concrete causes and effects, a world which has to be assumed as a whole, before we can begin to look for the connection of its elements. If, then, reality were a purely intellectual affair, and if we were able to assume that the essential facts were all in our possession, we should have in the test of consistency a fairly adequate account of the matter. If we can take for granted that our past knowledge adequately represents the world, then when any new fact makes its appearance, that explanation of it which renders it consistent with reality as already known, we shall call

the true explanation, while any other will be false. But this clearly fails to give the weight which it deserves to a very evident characteristic of our knowledge, its partial and fragmentary nature. Any view which I may hold about the world not only may, but must, omit a very large proportion of the facts which really are pertinent, and consequently the ability to harmonize those facts which I have already gotten hold of, can give me no positive assurance that added knowledge might not change the result very materially. If it were true, as some people are fond of asserting, that a fact is a fact, about which there is nothing more to be said, we might console ourselves with the belief that at least we could rely implicitly upon the truth of which we were already in possession, and that growth of knowledge could simply add to this, not change it; but in reality we have not got the true fact at all, but only a certain amount of raw material

for it, until we know what the relationships are which help to constitute its nature; and it is just these relationships which not only are now beyond our knowledge, but to some extent must always be so. The mere fact, therefore, that the data which we have at hand are consistent, does not exclude the possibility that further data would throw quite another light upon our theory. But practically, of course, we are not compelled to stop with the intellectual material we already possess, nor even to wait passively for new material to turn up; but we can go to work to discover the data we are in need of by the process of active experiment. If we have anything that we desire to explain, and which, consequently, as the fact of its needing explanation shows, stands in some sort of opposition to other facts which we have been accustomed to accept as true, the process which we go through is, in a general way, as follows:

We cast about in our minds for some theory which will make the opposing facts harmonious, and when one suggests itself which we think is plausible, we attempt to fit the facts into it. Perhaps we succeed in doing this, and then the hypothesis which we have selected holds the field for the time being, as that which probably is true. As a matter of fact, however, we should seldom or never have a process which was quite so simple as this. Our first theory very likely will not hit the mark; we find that if it were true, a certain consequence would follow which evidently contradicts the known facts; and so we reject it, and set to work again to discover an hypothesis which shall prove more adequate. Nevertheless we have already made a little progress, even if only in a negative way; we have at least shut out one alternative, and by so doing have modified our data somewhat, since the meaning which they bear to us is now more definitely

limited. And even when we do come across a theory which we are able to accept, this theory does not appear all at once in its completeness, but only at first in the form of a rough draft; and it is not until after a prolonged process, in the course of which facts and theory alike undergo a gradual transformation, through the influence which each in turn exerts upon the other, that we succeed in getting the hypothesis moulded into a shape where we can rest satisfied with it.

In any act of reasoning, accordingly, there is a twofold movement which is continually going on, from the facts which are given to an hypothesis which shall serve to harmonize them, and from this hypothesis, again, back to consequences which, if true, it would imply, and which we can thereupon compare with the facts, and so test whether the hypothesis is valid; and it is this latter movement which is the logical basis of experiment. But while in this sense we make use of

the principle of experiment every time we reason at all, it is better for the sake of clearness to confine the term to a special class of processes by which we endeavor to arrive at truth. Taken on a somewhat larger scale, there are two attitudes in reasoning which are comparatively distinct, although we cannot say that either of them involves principles which are not also present in the other in a less conspicuous way. We may, and frequently do, in our reasoning, take a certain pretty definite group of known facts as practically exhausting the data which our hypothesis is to account for, and then the test by which we determine whether our theory is correct or not is sufficiently defined by calling it the test of consistency. Granted that such and such are the facts, I ask what theory will harmonize them, and that which does succeed in harmonizing them I take as the truth of the matter. But while it may be that for practical purposes I am

justified in thus taking the data as sufficiently known, I am hardly justified in doing this in a theoretical way. Theoretically, no truth is anything but a more or less probable hypothesis, and therefore it must always be prepared to find a place for new and disturbing facts. My knowledge extends to only a very small portion of the universe, and even though I were fully convinced that all other facts were quite irrelevant, I might be, and probably I should be, altogether mistaken; for in a world in which everything is bound up together, we never can be certain that the next fact which comes up may not compel us to revise our beliefs. If we are to be on the safe side, therefore, we must not only get a theory which reconciles the facts that are already given, but we must proceed to test this theory further, by an appeal to possible new facts, and that not in a passive way, by accepting them when they come to hand, but by actively look-

ing for them. And in such a case we may describe the test of our hypothesis as the test of experiment. We cannot stop with saying, Granted the facts, this theory reconciles them, but we also are bound to go on and say, Granted the theory, this new fact ought, as a result, to be true; and then we are in a position to go to work to discover whether it actually is true or not. If it is not true, our theory, which included all previous data, fails to meet the requirements of added knowledge, and so has to be abandoned; if it is true, we have another reason for believing that the theory is also true. We have not demonstrated the theory, but we have added to its probability; the point at which we can stop, and call our theory so well established that it needs no further testing, is a practical question, which will be answered differently in different cases.

We are not to suppose, however, that there is any real conflict between these

two nominally different tests of truth, consistency and experiment; and which we shall call the ultimate test, is only a matter of our point of view. Perhaps we may say that on the theoretical side consistency is the ultimate criterion, while experiment is superior to consistency only as a purely practical point of method. Theoretically, experiment itself implies the test of consistency behind it. Into the hypothesis he is testing the scientist has put all his knowledge of the world, and it only is because he now is certain that another fact, which circumstances make a very important one for him, harmonizes with the scheme into which he has fitted the rest of his knowledge, that the experiment is a test of truth at all. The mere fact of his getting a certain experience which he sets out to get would mean nothing to him theoretically, though practically it might mean a great deal, unless this experience stood for a vast framework of knowledge beyond it,

which he is trying to make intellectually consistent. The necessity for experiment comes in, not because it takes the place of the test of consistency, but because our knowledge is confessedly fragmentary, and therefore theories which suit the facts as we know them now, may be inadequate to other facts which are just as real, but which we are not yet in possession of. Our aim is to harmonize all the facts of reality, but we cannot do this till we know what the facts are; and it is because it helps us to determine the nature of the facts, in all their complex relationships, that experiment is of value. It teaches us what to look for, and so enables us to trace our way better through the tangle which immediate experience presents, and to detect evidence which otherwise we should have passed unnoticed. And, in the stricter scientific sense of the word "experiment," it even makes it possible for us to produce new facts for ourselves at will, by controlling

processes in the outer world; and since these results are secured under conditions which we are able to a certain extent to determine, they are more illuminating for our comprehension of the world than any chance experience is likely to be. The scientist does not work simply in the intellectual realm; he arranges all sorts of delicate instruments in order to test his hypothesis by facts. If he can act on a certain theory, and get the particular sensation which he expects from it, this is the test upon which he relies, rather than upon the apparent faultlessness of his theory in a purely intellectual way. But the reason why a careful experiment may give him more confidence than a mere intellectual hypothesis, no matter how apparently satisfactory, which has not been experimentally tested, is not because experiment has superseded the test of consistency, but because he is perfectly aware that any knowledge which he may have at present is wofully deficient, both

in extent and in exactness, and that, therefore, what seem to him now to be facts may be consistent, and still not stand the test of further contact with reality. Consistency is the goal which ultimately we are seeking, but the mere ideal of consistency is of no avail to us unless we know what the facts are which are to be consistent; and this we can discover only by a process of intelligent search.

But there is still another way, also, in which active experiment may be said to be more ultimate than intellectual consistency, and to understand this we may turn again to the part which knowledge as a whole plays in life. What purpose does thought serve for the practical man? Evidently the purpose of teaching him how to do that which he wants to do. So long as I am able to go on successfully with what I am interested in doing, I have no need for the thought process; but when my activity is interrupted, it be-

comes necessary to review the situation before I can take up the thread again. The interruption means that my past habits, to which a large share of my activities are due without needing any special reflective process to accompany them, no longer are able to meet the demands, but have to be changed to fall in with new conditions. When such a thing as this occurs, experience falls apart into two connected phases. On the one hand, we have certain definite material to work upon, — the present habit which needs to be changed, — and this is represented in intellectual terms by the sensational or given element, which now is made to stand out definitely in consciousness for the purpose of revealing its defects, and which always has to be present in some form for thought to manipulate. If I am learning to do some new thing, for example, to ride a bicycle, I can only do it by utilizing those same past habits of walking, running, etc., which are so

inadequate to meet the situation now, and which consequently require an attention to be given them, which they never would have thought of demanding if, as before, I had simply kept on being content to go afoot. But we cannot change these habits without having some idea, if only an indefinite one, of the direction in which the change has to be made, and this feeling of the end towards which we are all the time working, is represented in experience by the concept, or abstract thought, which thus is the element that controls the process of thinking, and keeps it within the desired channels. The concept, on the practical side, is simply a theory or hypothesis which attempts to formulate the best way of doing what we have set out to do; and if it is successful, if it meets the situation, and harmonizes the different and more or less contradictory elements which the situation presents, if, ultimately, we can act upon it, and act in a way that satis-

fies us, then the theory has served its purpose.

If, then, we are to find the explanation of practical knowledge in its relation to active life, we cannot deny the same office to knowledge in its higher and seemingly more independent aspects, without making an arbitrary division somewhere, and cutting off the theoretical life from any possibility of a scientific explanation. The value of knowledge, then, is to be found only in the fact that it contributes, ultimately, to life; it has no use purely in itself, but is meant to be acted upon. And philosophical knowledge can be no exception to the general rule. If it were an exception, then ultimate scepticism not only would be possible, but it would be quite justifiable. So long as we are alive, we must of necessity keep on doing something, and for most men their work is quite enough to occupy their thoughts. If now philosophy has nothing to say to the serious and necessary business of life,

it can hardly complain if, with most people, it is allowed to fall into the background. But we have tried to show that this is a wrong conception of what philosophy is. It is just our work in the world that requires us, if this work is to be performed in anything more than a mechanical and unintelligent way, to understand the nature of the world in which we are working; and for this a philosophy is not only desirable, but it is inevitable. We may get along without this or that philosophy, but some theory or other, some attitude towards life, we must, as intelligent beings, necessarily adopt. And this attitude means so much to us because it is the theory on which we act. It will not determine how we are to build houses, or plough fields, at any rate directly; but over those larger activities which make up our essential life, over the general principles which guide us, ultimately, even in our most detailed work, its influence will be direct and all-important. We have

now, accordingly, to examine a little more closely what relation this connection with life bears to the intellectual criterion of philosophical truth.

If it is true that knowledge is of value to us, ultimately, because it teaches us how to act in the world, then our intellectual theories may be hypotheses in a sense which needs to be distinguished from the way in which we have used the term "hypothesis" hitherto. The belief that there is a fact of reality corresponding to my theory is worth something to me, because, in a given situation in which I am called upon to act, it may form the basis of an hypothesis as to what particular way of acting is best fitted to secure my ends, is the right thing for me to do. The concept, or theory, or statement of intellectual truth, is not in itself necessarily an hypothesis as to what action some particular occasion calls for, but in the end its usefulness depends upon its being capable of serving as the foundation for such an

hypothesis. And for an hypothesis in this latter sense, there is no final test except the test of acting on it. I cannot know for certain whether this particular plan will secure the end I have in view, except by trying it; and if it leads to the results which I expect, the hypothesis may be said to have been demonstrated. But it is evident that while, between the test of a practical hypothesis by action, and the test of an intellectual theory by experiment, there is a close connection, they are not by any means the same. Our attitude in the two cases is altogether different. The action of the scientist in performing an experiment in electricity, and of the electrician in using a scientific theory for practical ends, may be identically the same; but the object of the one is to find out what would have been true objectively, even if the experiment never had been performed, while for the electrician the practical result is everything, and if he could have attained it on the basis of an

hypothesis which the scientist would call absurd, he would have been just as well satisfied. An experiment may at the same time both test the objective truth of a theory, and demonstrate the practicability or impracticability of a plan of action, but the two things are not therefore to be confused. In so far as the latter may be called a test, it is a test of what, in the large sense, we may speak of as the moral question, — the question as to what particular thing is, in a given situation, the right thing to do. Such a question is not one that we can settle satisfactorily on intellectual grounds alone, for the reason that what we are to decide about is a particular act which still remains to be performed, and which, therefore, has to meet a situation different in some respect from any other situation that ever has arisen. The only decisive test, then, after we have to the best of our judgment considered the matter in the light of past experience, is to act, and see what happens. The hy-

pothesis is tested by this act, as a particular act; but it is so tested only because the question is not an intellectual but a moral one. The hypothesis is not that a certain thing is already true as a fact, but that a certain thing ought to be done as an act. And in the latter case it is possible to have proof that amounts to certainty. Let us suppose that I wish to manufacture a certain gas; I go to work, on the basis of what I know about chemistry, to devise a definite set of conditions which shall produce the result that I desire, and when the result is once secured, there is nothing more to say. But what has been demonstrated is the fact that a certain proposed line of action really did accomplish what I expected of it. The scientist's problem is, however, an altogether different one. He does not want to get a particular result as an end, but he wants to show by this particular result that something is already true of reality, even before the result takes place.

If, then, we distinguish these two attitudes in regard to knowledge, we still need to bring them into a more intimate connection. We have already seen that, logically, knowing must be subordinated to doing, the intellectual must presuppose the moral. None of our thinking simply ends in thinking; there would be no incentive for us to think over the facts which past experience has brought to us, except in the way of mere day-dreams, if we did not wish in some way to use this knowledge. There is no reason why I should take any interest in that which bears no relation whatever to my active life. Of what possible use could it be to me to know the facts of history, unless these had within themselves the possibility of throwing light on my own duties as a citizen and a member of society? Even the æsthetic or romantic interest is not a purely private and subjectively intellectual affair; the artist certainly does not do just the

same things, or live just the same life, as his Philistine neighbor. The end of knowledge, then, and the only end that will justify or explain it, is to serve as an hypothesis, which, since it has to do with conduct, may be called a moral hypothesis. But this is so far from denying knowledge the right to possess, in a less ultimate sense, an interest on its own account, that, on the contrary, it directly implies it. I cannot form any hypothesis as to what I ought to do in a given situation, except on the basis of a knowledge of what the world is like in which my action has to be performed. And if I waited till I actually had to act before acquiring this knowledge, I should certainly be compelled to put up with an hypothesis that was unnecessarily inadequate. Intellectual knowledge, which is knowledge about matters of fact, is thus the absolute presupposition of moral action, if this latter is to be intelligent; and for intellectual know-

ledge to be an effective instrument when it is needed, it will have to be cultivated meanwhile on its own account. And, more than this, it is a presupposition, not in the sense that it is a necessary means to an end which, once attained, can forthwith dispense with it, but, on the contrary, as itself the most important factor in this end. Just as soon as we get above the level of purely physical action, knowledge forms an absolutely essential part of that active experience in which life consists. It is just this which differentiates the spiritual from the animal — the presence in it of rational insight. Experience cannot satisfy us, except as we feel that we have got hold, in some fairly adequate measure, of the meaning of this experience in terms of all the world, and so in terms of knowledge. Consequently, while the *distinction* still remains valid, we find that it is impossible to make any real separation, after all, between action as

a test for the validity of an hypothesis which is applied to a concrete practical or moral situation, and this same action as testing theoretically the knowledge on which our practical hypothesis is based. Since all experience which rises above the physical plane has to do with essentially similar facts to those with which a new moral situation is concerned, the ability on the part of our practical hypothesis to meet this particular situation, by that very fact throws light upon the nature of reality. It is through just such situations in the past — it is through life, in a word — that we have gained all the material that we possess for answering questions about reality at all; and it is only by getting new experience, which of course is always in the form of particular situations, that we can add to this knowledge. On the other hand, our practical question is not answered, our practical need not met, except as the action which

attempts to meet it helps also to clear up the intellectual statement of the world; for an action, as a rational experience, only exists as it understands itself in terms of its relations to reality beyond it. In any definite act of life which has a spiritual value, it is impossible to separate the use of the hypothesis as the means of reaching an immediate practical end, and the use of this result, in turn, as a test of the hypothesis regarded as an intellectual truth, for both these elements are for a rational being inseparably blended.

A philosophical theory, then, is simply the systematization of such intellectual knowledge. It is the most consistent statement I am able to make as to what the nature of reality is like — a statement, however, which is made, not on its own account, but because I need the best knowledge I can get of the world in order to tell me how to do my duty in the world. And it is for this reason that

absolute scepticism is impossible for a rational being. I may be sceptical about certain philosophies, but if I am to live in the world at all, and live as a rational being, some hypothesis I must have by which to direct my actions. Otherwise it is only an animal existence that I am living. It is, consequently, no mere result of chance that our knowledge is only partial, and not in the form of a fully rounded system. It is impossible to get reality completely summed up in thought, if thought leads us to do something which thus changes reality. Not only is our present thought not final, but the whole justification of thinking lies in the fact that it is not final, and that life still has something for us to do for which thought is a necessary preparation. Nothing, indeed, could be more tedious and insipid than thought which leads to no new developments, which grinds over the same thing again and again, and is simply itself indefinitely. And yet this is

just what the goal of life would be, if the ideal were a state of perfect knowledge.

In saying that truth represents at best a more or less probable hypothesis, which no conceivable circumstances would ever enable us to make logically complete, we are, it is true, abandoning an ideal which has been very widespread and very persistent. Nevertheless we may fairly ask what, after all, there is so enticing in the ideal of certainty, that we should hesitate to give it up? Might not a life of certainty, indeed, be a rather stupid life? If truth is meant to furnish us with an hypothesis for action, why should we insist on being insured against all possible mischance before we begin to act? Is there not a charm also in the fact of risking something, of having the courage to venture, and to take the consequences? If, indeed, the ideal were perfect and complete knowledge, something finished and done for, we might have some reason to complain. But if

the zest of life is found in living, a finished state of knowledge would be no substitute for it. That we have to act upon a knowledge that is incomplete is no real hardship, if we get the essence of reality in our action, and not in knowledge, except as this forms a part of action. If our share in a reality which is a never-ending process, consists in that which we contribute to the active work of the world, we do not want this process ever to end in a passive state of thought. There does not seem, then, to be any very strong reason why we should not be satisfied with the guide of probability, unless, indeed, we confuse the lack of logical certainty with the lack of practical conviction, and this there is no need of doing. Lack of logical demonstration does not mean a state of mind in which one thing seems as probable as another; it may be consistent with a high degree of conviction, even of moral certainty. We have not

all our data, to be sure, but we have a vast amount of it already — the whole past experience of the race, — and in organizing this, our criterion of intellectual consistency can be relied upon so far as it will go. And not only that, but we can test our theory by experiment, and this is what, as a matter of fact, we are constantly doing. Of course we cannot test it decisively by any single result in the outer world, as we might a scientific truth. A philosophical theory is formulated almost entirely in the intellectual realm, and there is no one particular act which can be sufficiently comprehensive to prove it. Since its basis is the whole past experience which the race has undergone, no new experience in the next day or week is likely to throw any startlingly new light on the essential facts of human life, in such a way as to test, definitely and conclusively, a theory of life's meaning. Any single act is necessarily so limited in comparison with the total sum

of reality, that it cannot possibly bring together elements sufficiently exhaustive to prove or disprove a theory which takes in the universe. Nevertheless, just as action in the physical world can be used to test the scientific truth which deals with this world, so philosophy, which deals with life in its entirety, can be brought to the test of life. In other words, we come back to the commonplace that we can find out the meaning of life only by living, not by merely reasoning about it. The consistency of which we are in search is not the mere logical consistency of certain abstract truths, nor the consistency of scientific formulæ simply, though these are both a part of it; but it is the consistency which is demanded by our whole nature as life develops it, and so it is only life that can bring to light the data without which our intellectual solution will be nothing but a bare framework, logically correct perhaps, but absolutely

inadequate. The youth whose experience is limited cannot possibly, by mere intellectual gymnastics, reach the riper insight of the man; he may echo the same formulæ, and may see how logically they are arrived at, but they do not mean the same to him. And since living is more comprehensive a thing than any particular phase within it, we cannot, as we have seen, test a theory which has to do with life in its completeness, except by a process which is slower and less definitely formulated than the one we use for minor beliefs. But yet this process is no less real. What is the ultimate test of a philosophical theory? Simply its ability to harmonize all the elements of life — intellectual, emotional, and practical — in the progressive experience of living, as the test of a scientific theory is its ability to harmonize that part of life which is made up of our relation to the physical world. For each individual, that test is

his whole life experience; for the race, it is that vaguer process through which beliefs which fail to satisfy the demands of life are weeded out, and more adequate conceptions take their place. Of course this makes the work of testing truth far more slow and tedious than our impatient desires can rest satisfied with, and we have constantly the attempt to find some shorter cut, which shall enable us to get demonstration here and now. But we have only to look back over the history of thought to see that it is precisely demonstration which, in the long run, is farthest off from demonstrating; whether we are willing or not, in reality the search for truth is a long and a slow one. Of course this is not saying that there is nothing for us to do but fold our hands and wait, or that, until some far-off issue is reached, all things are alike possible. We have already a large amount of experience back of us to form our conclusions on, and a thing

may have any degree of probability, according as it meets the test of consistency with these facts already known. It is only demonstration, absolute certainty, that we must do without; and in so far as intellectual reasoning fails to reach results which command the universal acceptance of mankind, it is only to time and added experience that we can look, not indeed even now for logical certainty, but for an ever-growing agreement and strength of conviction.

And we may reply in a similar way to the objection that the incompleteness of knowledge makes it impossible that it should satisfy us; if knowledge is, and must be, incomplete, then not only can we never be certain that it is true, but we can say positively that it is not true, since the facts which it fails to include would necessarily modify it. But because knowledge fails to be complete, it does not therefore follow that it may not be true essentially, and adequate to our pur-

pose. There are two conceptions here which we should distinguish. A theory may be inadequate because, while it accounts for a certain number of facts, there are other facts for which it finds no room; and such a theory must give place, as knowledge grows, to one that is more comprehensive, as the Ptolemaic system gave place to the Copernican. Or, on the other hand, a theory may be correct in general outline, and capable of admitting new facts as they come to light without changing its essential nature; and then we have no hesitation in calling the theory true, even though we admit that the truth is of a kind which is formal rather than real, and that it never will outgrow the need of a continual modification in detail, as its abstract correctness comes to be applied to facts, and to take up a concrete filling. If the best understanding we can get of life is so utterly inadequate, that we are compelled to say that, from the

standpoint of reality as a whole, the essence of the thing would take on a shape which is utterly unlike anything we know, then indeed we might be excused for feeling that our appearance of knowledge is a cheat and a delusion. But we do not need to hold this. We may fairly demand, and in the hope of some day finding our demand realized, that the theory which we accept as true should, at least in outline, represent the ultimate truth, without going beyond such insight as the nature of our own lives may render us capable of understanding. A profounder knowledge, then, would not result in making this less real, but more so; it would transform it only by filling it out, by making it concrete, and adding to it in value and appreciation. We have no need to exalt our own experience, or to deny that it comes immeasurably short of realizing the full richness of the world. But this more ultimate reality is not therefore a

thing unknown and mysterious, but the same active, conscious life of social values, raised to a vastly higher power. In its essential nature our theory may be true, but it is not the whole truth, simply because reality is not theory, but life. For any truth that is vital, that is more than a bare intellectual outline, we must go to life itself, and to the ever-increasing wealth of meaning which is revealing itself in the history of mankind.

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